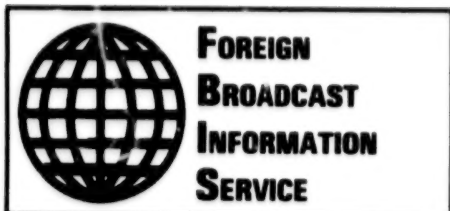


JPRS-TEP-94-010

14 June 1994



JPRS Report

Epidemiology

Epidemiology

JPRS-TEP-94-010

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

West/Central/East Africa Health Reports— 14 Apr-5 May

AB0605114094

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of disease reports monitored from FBIS Abidjan Bureau and EAU coverage areas. Source information is given in parentheses after each item.

Ghana

Malaria—A health official has announced at a workshop that the high incidence of malaria in the Effidua-Sekyeré District is due to self-medication by patients and bad treatment practices by health personnel. According to the official, one-third of all diseases reported in the district last year were malaria cases, out of which 812 people were admitted to hospital and 21 died. [Accra Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Radio Network in English 0600 GMT 2 May 94]

Buruli ulcer disease—The incidence of the buruli ulcer disease in the Ashanti Region is now reported to have drastically reduced following systematic weekly and monthly intervention in the endemic areas by medical teams from the district and the regional directorate of health services during the past nine months. According to the Ashanti regional director of health services, Dr. J. K. Amofa, a total of 300 buruli ulcer cases were recorded in eight districts in the region last year. This year, the number has reduced to only 56 cases from three districts. The Amansie West District, which recorded the highest number of 200 cases last year, now has only 24 recorded cases.

Dr. Amofa said in an interview at Tentokrom that whereas last year, a monthly average of between 40 and 50 new cases of the disease were reported at health institutions, this year this has dropped to a monthly average of between eight and 10 new cases. He said the medical intervention have been able to successfully stabilize the situation in the Kwabre, Effidua-Sekyeré, and Atwima Districts, where no new cases have been reported. The only problem area now is Ashanti Akim North, where about 30 cases have been recorded. Dr. Amofa said the early diagnosis of the disease and the removal of the preulcerative nodules in the victims through excision have contributed to the drastic reduction in the incidence of the disease. Between August last year and March this year, medical doctors removed preulcerative nodules from 48 victims at the Tentokrom buruli ulcer dressing station alone. A total of 87 ulcers were also dressed at the station and are in various stages of healing. [Accra Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Radio Network in English 1300 GMT 3 May 94]

Niger

Guinea worm—Guinea worm disease is generally on the decline in Niger. The number of recorded cases fell from 33,000 in 1991 to 25,000 in 1994. [Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1830 GMT 28 Apr 94]

Measles—A measles epidemic has been rampant in the Taketa subdistrict for one week now. This was announced by Maton Issa Maifada, head of the state subdistrict, who added that the epidemic has already claimed about 30 lives

in Yelwa village, located north of Taketa. [Niamey Voix du Sahel Network in French 1200 GMT 4 May 94]

Nigeria

AIDS—At the inauguration of an AIDS screening center in Asaba, the Delta State administrator pledged that his administration will do its utmost to check the spread of AIDS. He said the disease is spreading very rapidly in parts of the state and that the number of carriers has more than doubled within the past two years. He said it is estimated that about one in 20 Nigerians currently has the AIDS virus. [Lagos NTA Network in English 2000 GMT 25 Apr 94]

Measles—A report from Benue State says at least 15 children have died following an outbreak of measles in Okpoku local government area of the state. The supervisor of health in the local government who announced this says 60 other children have been treated. She said a team of medical officials had visited the area and inoculated about 300 inhabitants under the supervision of the local government caretaker committee chairman. [Kaduna Radio Nigeria in English 0900 GMT 3 May 94]

Guinea worm/tuberculosis/leprosy/HIV/AIDS—The Federal Government is to treat 80 percent of ponds in guinea worm-infested areas of the country by the end of this year. The minister of health, Dr. Sarki Tafida, disclosed this while addressing the 47th WHO assembly in Geneva. He said his ministry is working hard with the Ministry of Water Resources to ensure that all guinea worm-infested villages are provided with clean drinking water. The minister stated that the fight against the disease has been successful and has led to a drop of about 90 percent.

Dr. Tafida told the gathering that the government is also waging a war on tuberculosis under the joint national tuberculosis and leprosy control programs. He further spoke of efforts to control the spread of HIV virus and AIDS through the establishment of a national AIDS control program. [Kaduna Radio Nigeria in English 1700 GMT 5 May 94]

Somalia

Diarrhea—Somaliland Health Minister Yasin Mohamoud Faradon on 14 April announced the outbreak of serious diarrhea in Sool region where 22 persons have died and over 50 have been hospitalized. The epidemic was reported in the region on 7 April. It has seriously affected the town of Laas Caanood and three villages on the outskirts of the town. Health Minister Yasin Mohamoud Faradon added: We cannot yet ascertain whether the disease is diarrhea or cholera. We are awaiting the results of clinical samples sent to Nairobi to be analyzed.

On action taken by his ministry against the epidemic, the minister said that all available medicine and equipment to combat the disease have been delivered to Sool Region. He said all adjacent regions have been forewarned and necessary precautions have been taken to combat the disease if it spreads to those regions.

The minister further added that senior health officials have been sent to the area and people are being briefed on the importance of general and individual cleanliness. He said chlorine has been added to all water wells to kill

germs. Health Minister Yasin Mohamoud Faradon concluded that all efforts will be made to prevent the disease from spreading further. [Hargeysa Radio Hargeysa Voice of the Republic of Somaliland 1200 GMT 14 Apr 94]

Cholera—A big meeting to discuss the eradication of cholera has been held at the office of Higher Committee to Fight Cholera at Medina Hospital in Mogadishu. The best way of controlling the disease, especially during the present pilgrimage period, was fully discussed in the meeting. Participants proposed that pilgrims should easily obtain medical inspections related to their travel, as requested by the Saudi Health Ministry. [(Clandestine) Radio Mogadishu Voice of the Great Somali People in Somali 1700 GMT 25 Apr 94]

Cholera—Reports from Marka District of Shabeellaha Hoose region say that cholera has spread to parts of the district and its environs. Many people have died due to lack of health care since relief agencies do not operate there due to insecurity. The area is in dire need of emergency aid to cope with the disease. [Mogadishu Voice of the Somali Republic in Somali 1700 GMT 3 May 94]

Southern Africa Health Reports 25 Apr-1 May

MB0105161894

[Editorial Report] Following is a compilation of reports monitored by FBIS Mbabane Bureau from 25 Apr-1 May concerning outbreaks of and reports on various diseases. Items are listed by country and disease. The source follows each item.

Angola

Cholera—"A serious cholera outbreak, the biggest over the past four years, is progressively spreading in the Angolan coastal provinces. The Voice of Resistance of the Black Cockerel learned this from the KWACHA UNITA PRESS [KUP]. According to KUP, Luanda Province is topping the list with more than 25 cases of cholera per day. It is followed by Cuanza Sul Province which is also experiencing an outbreak of bilharzia. Health sources fear many people could die of the disease because hospitals have no conditions to effectively fight the disease. Cholera kills more than 30,000 people in Angola every year. The main victims are children." (Jamba Voz da Resistencia do Galo Negro in Portuguese 1200 GMT 1 May 94)

Mozambique

AIDS—"A total of 60 AIDS cases were reported in Tete Province between January and March of 1994, raising to 336 the number of cases recorded since 1986. The Tete Province Health Services Directorate has said that AIDS is spreading throughout the province at a frightening pace." (Maputo Radio Mozambique Network in Portuguese 1730 GMT 26 Apr 94)

Measles—"Manica Province registered 265 cases of measles last year, against 108 diagnosed in 1992. This was revealed during the 22d provincial health coordinating council meeting. The meeting also revealed that more than 420,000 consultations were carried out throughout the province last year, following the normalization of security conditions." (Maputo Radio Mozambique Network in Portuguese 1400 GMT 29 Apr 94)

Southern African Health Reports

1-8 May

MB0805182694

[Editorial Report] Following is a compilation of reports monitored by FBIS Mbabane Bureau from 1 to 8 May concerning outbreaks of and reports on various diseases. Items are listed by country and disease. The source follows each item.

Angola

Cholera in Benguela Province—"Cholera is said to be spreading in (Sousa Chipande), Benguela Province. Our correspondent in the province reports that more than 1,000 cholera cases were recorded in April alone. That figure does not account for people who have not approached hospitals for treatment." (Jamba Voz de Resistencia do Galo Negro in Portuguese 0600 GMT 6 May 94)

Cholera in Luanda—The coordinator for diarrhea-related diseases in Luanda Province reports that of the 400 cholera cases recorded in Luanda in the first third of this year, four were fatal. She said that 260 cases were recorded in April alone and two of those people died. A total of 40 cases and one death had been reported in January. She admitted that, because there are clandestine cemeteries on the outskirts of the capital, cholera-related deaths may have occurred and not been reported to the authorities. She also said that 4,189 cholera cases had been recorded last year, resulting in the deaths of 109 people. (Luanda Radio Nacional Network in Portuguese 1230 GMT 7 May 94)

Mozambique

AIDS in Nampula—"A total of 57 AIDS cases were confirmed in Nampula Province last year, 33 in the city of Nampula. A source in the Nampula Province Health Department told NOTICIAS that at least 2 percent of the province's inhabitants carry the AIDS virus." (Maputo Radio Mozambique Network in Portuguese 0500 GMT 3 May 94)

Dysentery—"A total of 10 people died of dysentery in Moma District, the south coast of Nampula Province, between March and April. Moma District Health Director Xavier Canjalo told Radio Mozambique that the outbreak is already under control and at present there are no other cases. He said this was caused by drinking dirty water." (Maputo Radio Mozambique Network in Portuguese 1730 GMT 5 May 94)

Swaziland

AIDS—According to a recent study by the Ministry of Education "Swaziland is to have more than 100,000 AIDS orphans in 12 years time." "The study projected that the number of orphans will reach 11,500 by the year 2006. The rising number of AIDS orphans would require assistance in their education 'as natural parents and economically active members of the extended family fall victim to AIDS.'" (Mbabane THE SWAZI OBSERVER in English 5 May 94 p 1)

RWANDA

Fighting Continues; Cholera Epidemic Threatens Kigali

AB2804183894 Paris AFP in English 1804 GMT 28 Apr 94

[Report by Annie Thomas]

[Excerpts] Nairobi, April 28 (AFP)—Fighting raged in Rwanda on Thursday [28 April] as a cholera epidemic threatened the central African nation swamped in ethnic bloodletting and relief officials launched impassioned pleas for aid. More than 40 orphans, half of them seriously wounded and some with arms or legs hacked off, were flown to Italy on Thursday after being rescued from an orphanage by aid workers. [passage omitted]

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) meanwhile warned that cholera was likely to sweep Kigali, strewn with rotting bodies, some half eaten by dogs. Much of the capital is without water and the situation in the rest of the country is equally catastrophic, UNICEF's Peter McDermott said. "I'm sure there are already cases of cholera," McDermott told AFP on his return from Kigali on Thursday. He said fighting had prevented medical teams from assessing needs.

Two tonnes of chlorine flown in by UNICEF were stuck in a warehouse at the airport which was hit by a shell Wednesday, though 40 tonnes of food and emergency supplies have been partly distributed to needy civilians, McDermott said.

Relief agencies meanwhile launched impassioned pleas for international aid for Rwanda, where the UN has slashed its peacekeeping force from 2,500 to 270 because it feared for their safety. [passage omitted]

"Half the population urgently need help," said Philippe Gaillard, the Red Cross chief in Kigali. Rwanda's population is estimated at seven million. Gaillard said that before the fighting, a million Rwandans displaced by the three-year civil war already depended on food aid. Another million have fled their homes since April 6, he said. "The international community must not forget Rwanda, even if it has to be concerned with Gorazde and South Africa too," Gaillard said. "It's the heart of darkness in Rwanda," Red Cross spokesman Tony Burgener said.

Unable to work safely in Kigali, aid agencies are organising relief operations from border towns in neighbouring Uganda, Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania.

They bring in food and medicine, and evacuate casualties.

Red Cross workers went to the north-eastern town of Gisenyi on Thursday to see 350 orphans who may also need to be evacuated to Zaire.

In Kigali, for the first time in two weeks the Red Cross was able to get 13 wounded people to hospital without being harassed at the numerous roadblocks manned by militiamen, soldiers or rebel guerrillas.

The Red Cross had stopped evacuating casualties after militiamen murdered six wounded people being driven to hospital in a Red Cross vehicle two weeks ago.

SWAZILAND

Health Minister Warns of AIDS Situation in Country

MB3004110494 Mbabane THE SWAZI NEWS in English 30 Apr 94 p 1, 32

[Report by Vusie Ginindza]

[Excerpts] Minister for Health, Dr. Derek von Wissel on Thursday night gave the Senate a horrifying picture of the AIDS situation and its impact on the immediate future of the country.

He said government will never cope with the scourge in as far as concerns treatment of AIDS patients and provision of hospital facilities. [sentence as received]

To cope, he said, government will have to build a hospital in every six months and be able to provide between 400 to 500 beds every year.

"That is taking into consideration that each patient will be in hospital for 20 days," he said.

He said the present nurses-to-patient ratio stands at 1 to 600 and there is only E[emalangen]1 million this year to be used in the prevention of AIDS, after having been increased from E300,000 last year.

He told senators that in the next two years, people will be dying in large numbers as long as they don't change their behaviour.

As a result, he said, there would be 40,000 orphans and helpless old people who would be left stranded as bread-winners, as people in the sexually active range, would have died.

Dr. von Wissel was replying to several questions from Senators during the debate on the vote of the Ministry of Health.

Senators wanted to know the cause of the disease, its impact and if there were any plans to counter its effects.

The minister said sexual promiscuity is the largest contributing factor to the epidemic. He said children are becoming sexually active "much too much early" as between 15 to 18 years.

To emphasise this view, the minister informed the House that one out of 10 women who are treated for maternity problems in hospitals, is a child who attempted or committed a back-street abortion.

He said 75 percent of 16 year olds are sexually active, half of whom have got more than one partner at a time and have sex, at least, more than two times a month. [passage omitted]

Presently, he said, 22 percent of the population are HIV positive (have the virus that eventually develops into AIDS).

"One in every five in the country has the HIV virus. In certain areas, out of three women, one has it."

The minister said AIDS should not be stigmatized. "It's just like cancer or any other disease that we have since learnt to live with. So people should stop thinking of it as a dirty disease."

Cohort Study of HIV Infection Among Drug Users in Ruili and Other Counties in Yunnan Province

54004807A Beijing ZHONGHUA LIUXINGBINGXUE ZAZHI [CHINESE JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY] in Chinese Vol 15 No 1, Feb 94 pp 3-5

[English abstract of article by Zheng Xiwen [6774 6932 2429], Zhang Jiapeng [1728 1367 7720], Qu Shuquan [2575 2579 3123], et al. of the Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine, Beijing]

[Text] In 1993, a second survey was conducted in Ruili City and two other counties, where a cohort study field was established in 1992. Seven hundred and fifty-five drug users and 102 spouses of HIV infected IDU's were interviewed. Nine samples among 54 from 89 IDU's in cohort were tested as seroconversion. The seroconversion rate (incidence rate) in IDU's (per hundred person years) in Ruili, Longchuan, and Luxi as well were 40.0, 12.2 and 0, respectively in 1993, comparing to 43.2, 12.2 and 0 in 1992. Thirty-eight were tested as positive among 108 samples from 116 newly recruited IDU's. The seroprevalence rates in these three counties were 85.7 percent, 40.0 percent and 0 in 1993, comparing to 81.8 percent, 44.6 percent and 5.1 percent in 1992. A coordination of the level between seroconversion and seroprevalence was observed. An increasing trend of seroprevalence among the spouses of HIV positive IDU's was found, the seroprevalence rate were 3.1 percent in 1990, 9.8 percent in 1992 and 7.4 percent in 1993. More attention should be paid to Luxi where the ratio of intravenous drug user increased rapidly, although fewer positives and later starting of drug using was found in this county.

China Begins Campaign To Combat Iodine Deficiency Diseases

HK0605072894 Beijing CHINA DAILY in English 6 May 94 p 3

[Article by Zhu Baoxia: "State Combats IDD's"]

[Text] The State yesterday kicked off a nationwide campaign to combat iodine deficiency diseases (IDDs).

Citizens around the country got free advice about how to identify fake from real iodized salt, which prevents the disease when taken.

In Beijing, officials set up consulting centres downtown and in rural districts where IDD is a threat.

And at the Beijing Children's Hospital, people crowded in to get free information.

The China Salt Industrial Corporation provided samples of fake and substandard iodized salt, while State Councillor Peng Peiyun, State officials and UN representatives at the event urged people to take iodized salt and called for a crackdown on fake products.

Several companies donated 1 million yuan (\$115,000) and iodized foods to children in rural areas.

IDDs can cause mental retardation and birth defects. They can also lead to miscarriages and are a cause of infant death.

Scientists say the intelligence quotient of children affected by IDD's is often 10 to 15 percentage points lower than their peers.

Yet the diseases can easily be prevented by consuming a small amount of iodine, a common additive in salt.

IDDs are common in 1,762 counties, 62.2 per cent of the country's total, according to a Ministry of Public Health report.

An estimated 400 million Chinese live in high-incidence districts. The figure accounts for 40 percent of the world's population threatened by IDD's.

In Beijing, IDD's affect 5 million people in 175 towns in 11 districts and counties.

Still, China has made enormous progress since the early 1950s. The number of patients has decreased from 35 million in the 1950s to 8 million, thanks to a better supply of salt and iodine pills.

But IDD's have made a comeback in recent years. Last year a survey of 12,000 children aged seven to 14 in Miyun County showed that goitre cases rose to 6 percent from 1.15 percent in 1988.

Medical experts attribute the jump to an increase in uniodized salt on the market.

An investigation of 2,309 batches of iodized salt in Beijing in 1992 showed that only 52 percent met State standards. A third of people threatened by IDD's failed to consume enough iodized salt. Many unknowingly had bought cheap—and fake—imitations.

In the past four months, Beijing officials uncovered 29 salt smuggling cases and confiscated 500 tons of the product.

China hopes to eradicate IDD's by the year 2000.

Yesterday's activities received support from five State ministries and administrations.

Local public health departments in other parts of the country also sponsored educational activities.

Clinical Investigation of Lyme Disease in Beijing Area

54004807B Beijing ZHONGHUA LIUXINGBINGXUE ZAZHI [CHINESE JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY] in Chinese Vol 15 No 1, Feb 94 pp 10-13

[English abstract of article by Feng Fangbo [7458 2455 3134], Zhang Weifen [1728 5633 5358], et al. of No. 261 Hospital of PLA, Beijing]

[Text] The investigation of Lyme disease in Beijing area is reported for the first time. The sera of 1,314 local residents were examined by indirect immunofluorescent assay, 11.9 percent of them were seropositive to *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The principal vector was *Haemaphysalis longicornis*. Six strains of *B. burgdorferi* were isolated from ticks or patients using modified BSK medium. Spirochetes were found in five treat the patients, and the effective rates were 64 percent and 88 percent, respectively.

Studies on Natural Foci of Tsutsugamushi Disease of the Autumn-Winter Type in Jiangsu

54004807C Beijing ZHONGHUA LIUXINGBINGXUE ZAZHI [CHINESE JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY] in Chinese Vol 15 No 1, Feb 94 pp 27-30

[English abstract of article by Guo Hengbin [6753 1854 1755], Wu Guanghua [0702 0342 5478], et al. of the Institute of Military Medicine, Nanjing Command, PLA, Nanjing]

[Text] Before 1986, tsutsugamushi disease was only prevalent in the south to Zhejiang Province in China, which was found to be the summer type, and *Leptotrombidium (L.) deliense* was regarded as the main vector. In October 1986, the authors found this disease in Nanjing and carried out a series of studies in 1986-1992. The results were as follows: Tsutsugamushi disease was epidemic in Nanjing and north of Jiangsu (including: Dongtai, Haian, Rudong, Jinhu, Hanjiang, Jiangdu); which was found to be autumn-winter type, with main reservoir hosts being *Apodemus agrarius*, *Rattus confucianus*, *R. norvegicus* and *Crocidura lasiura*; and transmitting vector *L. (L.) scutellare*. The pathogen of tsutsugamushi disease of the autumn-winter type—*Rickettsia tsutsugamushi* belonged to low-virulent strain, and could not easily be detected. After the inoculated mice were treated with diluted cyclophosphamide solution, 14 strains of *R. tsutsugamushi* were isolated from rats, mites and patients, and serological typing of their sera showed that they belonged to the Gilliam type. Natural foci in Jiangsu could be divided into two types—flat land and hilly land.

A New Natural Epidemic Focus of Scrub Typhus Found in Hunchun

54004807D Beijing ZHONGHUA LIUXINGBINGXUE ZAZHI [CHINESE JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY] in Chinese Vol 15 No 1, Feb 94 pp 31-33

[English abstract of article by Lu Zhixin [7627 1807 2450], Hu Lingmei [5170 3781 5019], et al. of the Institute of Military Medicine, Shenyang]

[Text] From May to June 1992, *Apodemus agrarius* and *Apodemus speciosus* were captured in Hunchun, Jilin Province. Four strains of *Rickettsia tsutsugamushi* were isolated from viscera of rats and trombiculid mites. At the same time, the antibody against *Rickettsia tsutsugamushi* was assayed in the sera of the local people and the wild rats. The positive rates were 15.2 percent and 16.4 percent, respectively. The above results showed that a natural epidemic focus of scrub typhus exists in Hunchun area.

Center for Control of Venereal Diseases, Leprosy Set Up

OW0605193294 Beijing XINHUA in English 1512 GMT 6 May 94

[Text] Nanjing, May 6 (XINHUA)—The Chinese National Center for Control of Venereal Diseases and Leprosy was inaugurated here today.

Located at the Institute of Dermatology and Venereology under the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, the center will be responsible for technically guiding the study and appraising the research results of sexual diseases and

leprosy, providing scientific data for the Ministry of Public Health to draw up policies for controlling the diseases, undertaking education and technical training of personnel in the field, monitoring the situation of epidemic diseases throughout the country, collecting international information about sexual diseases and leprosy, and conducting international academic exchanges in this field.

After several years of effort, sexual diseases had been basically wiped out in New China by the late 1950s and early 1960s. Meanwhile, the incidence of leprosy had been greatly reduced. Statistics show that so far a total of 360,000 victims of leprosy have been cured. At present, there are about 10,000 leprosy patients in the country.

However, the incidence of sexual disease in the country has risen again since the 1980s. In order to more effectively bring the diseases under control and to reach the goal of wiping out leprosy in China by the year 2000, the Ministry of Public Health decided to set up the national center.

Shandong Province First To 'Basically' Eradicate Leprosy

OW1005032394 Beijing XINHUA in English 0252 GMT 10 May 94

[Text] Jinan, May 10 (XINHUA)—Shandong Province has become China's first province to be basically free from leprosy.

According to the Ministry of Public Health, the province also took the lead in the country in wiping out kala-azar, filariasis and malaria.

According to historical data, this coastal province in east China has had a history of leprosy of 2,500 years.

A survey in 1960 found that the incidence of leprosy reached 0.1 percent in 16 counties and 0.01 percent to 0.1 percent in 74 counties.

To wipe out the infectious disease, the Shandong provincial government has set up 79 special leprosy control and treatment organizations since 1955. These organizations have employed 1,691 people.

While launching massive publicity on the elimination of leprosy, these organizations have carefully ferreted out leprosy cases and effectively studied and treated the diseases over the past four decades.

By the end of last year the province had cured 39,654 leprosy cases.

Shandong now has 255 patients under treatment.

Its incidence of leprosy over the past five years has dropped below 0.5 per 100,000 people, reaching the standard set by the Ministry of Public Health.

Statistics on Diseases, Immunizations Reported

HK2704080694 Beijing CHINA DAILY in English
27 Apr 94 p 3

[Report by staff reporter Zhu Baoxia: "Small Town Model for Immunizing Children"]

[Text] The small town of Zhaohegou in Hebei has turned into a national model for vaccinating children against epidemic diseases through its immunization insurance effort, now in its 10th year.

For several years, the town outside Sanhe City has not reported a single epidemic disease in its 2,800 children under seven.

It has one township hospital and 20 village clinics to support a population of 19,000.

In 1984 the town adopted a contracted responsibility system for preventive health care, a policy to supervise and urge village doctors to rededicate their efforts.

Each child is registered immediately after birth to ensure that no one misses the vaccinations.

Every household is charged seven yuan (\$0.8) a year for immunization insurance. If an insured child gets an epidemic disease, the village clinic will be fined and is responsible for paying all medical fees.

The system has won over the town farmers.

"Seven yuan a month [as published] is not too much and most important we don't have to worry about our child's health," said Zhao Yuhua, 30, the mother of a 2-year-old girl in Zhaotuzhuang Village.

The town has attracted attention from the central government and some international organizations.

Representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) called for the rest of China and other developing nations to follow Zhaohegou's lead by immunizing their children.

"Wiping out children's epidemic diseases like polio in China would be a great contribution toward the Asian and Western Pacific Region and the whole world as well," said Dr R.W.K. Gee of WHO.

State Councilor Peng Peiyun and Public Health Minister Chen Minzhang also want to spread the small town's success to other rural areas, where about 900 million Chinese live. Immunizing these areas is the critical portion of the national immunization programme.

If all the rural areas succeed like Zhaohegou, Peng said, China could wipe out polio next year.

Peng and Chen visited the town on Monday.

The ministry said its expanded immunization programme has dramatically reduced incidence and death rates of children's epidemic diseases by 89.93 and 88.78 percent.

Last year just 653 polio cases were reported, the lowest figure in Chinese history.

Measles cases dropped from more than 1 million in 1981 to last year's 117,800, and the incidence of whooping cough and diphtheria also dropped by 98.2 and 98.5 percent respectively.

But experts warned that each year there are 20 million newborns, requiring an astronomical number of vaccinations. Methods must be worked out to guarantee that all those children are immunized on time.

The ministry wants rural areas given top priority, and extensive publicity campaigns should be launched to educate farmers about disease prevention.

Public Health Ministry To Introduce Hepatitis C Virus

HK2204060094 Beijing CHINA DAILY in English
22 Apr 94 p 3

[Report by Zhu Baoxia: "Blood Banks To Get on Spot Test for Hepatitis C"]

[Text] The Ministry of Public Health is to introduce an instant test for the hepatitis C Virus in medical centres across the country this month.

The test, which can show up results in half an hour, will be applied to blood products in a bid to curb the spread of the chronic and sometimes fatal liver ailments caused by the virus.

About three per cent of China's 1.2 billion population carry the new virus strain.

Many hepatitis C victims contracted the virus through blood transfusions.

The instant test which will be used in the nation's hospitals and blood banks, was developed by the microbiological research department of the People Liberation Army's No. 2 Medical University.

Hepatitis C, which is mainly transmitted through blood, can lead to cirrhosis and cancer of liver.

About 90 percent of Chinese hepatitis cases caused by medical treatment are C type.

The PLA researchers studied the country's hepatitis C epidemics and established a virus gene bank.

CAMBODIA

Kompong Speu Malaria Incidence

94P30045 *Phnom Penh PRACHEACHON in Cambodian*
17 Feb 94

[Editorial Report] The 17 Feb 94 PRACHEACHON reported that in the past year, 88 people died of malaria in Kompong Speu Province. In a population sample of 40,000, some 11,000 were found to have malaria. Three districts in the province—Thpong, Oral, and Phnum Sruoch—are the worst affected.

HONG KONG

'Dramatic Rise' in Heterosexual HIV Transmissions Noted

HK2704074694 *Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English* 27 Apr 94 p 6

[Article by Alison Wiseman]

[Text] The gap between heterosexual and homosexual transmissions of the AIDS virus is closing far more quickly than predicted and looks set to disappear within the next three months, according to a government specialist.

In the past quarter there have been 16 heterosexual HIV transmissions reported compared with only one homosexual transmission, narrowing the gap to just eight cases, according to Health Department statistics.

There have now been 157 HIV infections in the territory that were heterosexual transmissions compared with 165 homosexual infections.

In January, the Health Department's AIDS consultant, Dr. Lee Shui-shan, predicted that the heterosexual/homosexual transmission gap would disappear by the end of the year.

But in a review of the HIV infection pattern during the first quarter of this year, Dr. Lee said yesterday heterosexual transmission was likely to overtake homosexual transmission by the middle of the year.

"What we are seeing is a dramatic rise in heterosexual transmission of HIV although the important message is that this gap is closing," Dr. Lee said.

Last month four men and two women were found to be infected with the AIDS virus, bringing the total number of reported cases of HIV in Hong Kong to 435.

One new case of full-blown AIDS was also reported to bring the total to 100, 65 of whom have died.

"Although we are still seeing a steady increase in the number of HIV infections we are seeing an explosive increase in the number of AIDS cases as more people infected with the virus are developing AIDS-related illnesses," Dr. Lee said.

In the past quarter there have been eight new AIDS cases compared with only one in the previous quarter.

Dr. Lee said the number of deaths from AIDS did not include "several" people with HIV who had committed suicide.

The Health Department's AIDS unit is now setting up a community charter to tackle the problem of discrimination against HIV carriers in the workplace.

"Most of those infected are of working age and so there is a need to actively educate people not to discriminate at work," Dr. Lee said.

INDONESIA

Three AIDS Cases Detected in Lampung Province

BK2404083994 *Jakarta MERDEKA in Indonesian*
11 Apr 94 p 4

[Text] Bandar Lampung, Sunday.—Two prostitutes, occupants of a brothel in Bandar Lampung, and a youth, who is currently detained at Lampung's Welfare Rehabilitation Center for a criminal offense, were found to be positively affected by the HIV virus.

Umar Hassan, chief of the team for prevention of AIDS in Lampung, stated to newsmen in Bandar Lampung on 9 April that the three persons were found to be positively affected with AIDS through a joint survey conducted with the District Health Department in March 1994.

Umar Hassan, who is also the third assistant of district social welfare office said, "We are still looking for the two prostitutes who are infected with AIDS. We will officially detain them when we find them."

Governor Pujono hoped that Lampung's team for the prevention of AIDS, which was established several months ago, would work to suppress the spread of the dangerous virus.

Pujono said, "Lampung is a transit point with a potential for the transmission of AIDS. Due to this, it is important that we undertake early preventive measures."

According to the data of the Regional Health Department, the two prostitutes Od (20) and Yn (28), who are affected with AIDS, were occupants of the service complexes at "Pemandangan" and "Pantai Harapan" in Panjang, Bandar Lampung, while Ys (28) was residing at Kalianda Welfare Board in south Lampung.

According to several colleagues of Od and Yn, the two had returned to their respective villages. They said, "They had left for Java several days before the 1994 Id 'al-Fitr holidays began." They also said, "Od and Yn had been staying in the Panjang service complexes for the last two years. They came from Java together with S and R."

Officials of the Lampung provincial authority have directed that the two AIDS affected prostitutes be sought and be detained as an effort to prevent the spread of the disease.

The exposure of the HIV cases in Lampung was due to the survey and tests conducted from 1,119 blood samples taken jointly by the Regional Health Department in Lampung and Lampung's team for the prevention of AIDS.

Blood samples were taken from 142 prostitutes in "Pemandangan", 134 others at "Pantai Harapan", 75 persons from Pantai Pijat, 59 SMEA YPP students, 509

persons from Napi Tanjungkarang, 103 persons from Napi Kalianda, 90 SMAN Kalianda students and seven tourist guides, including pimps, lesbians and homosexuals.

The blood samples were taken from the high-risk and HIV prone groups and tests were conducted. The outcome of the result was that three persons were tested positive for HIV.

In compliance with the Regional Health Department's report to the governor on 17 March 1994, blood tests were conducted to detect the spread of the HIV virus, social diseases and syphilis.

According to the head of the Lampung team for the prevention of AIDS, Drs. Umar Hassan, the AIDS problem needs to be perpetually pursued. He said, "We truly hope that Lampung will be free of prostitutes."

JAPAN

Asian Doctors To Be Invited to Tokyo for AIDS Seminar

OW1005125694 Tokyo KYODO in English
1019 GMT 10 May 94

[Text] Tokyo, May 10 KYODO—Japan plans to invite doctors from Asian countries to study AIDS treatment. Health and Welfare Ministry officials said Tuesday [10 May].

The plan, which could be put into practice by this fall, aims to tackle the rapid increase in the number of AIDS patients and HIV carriers in Asia, the officials said.

According to the plan, the ministry will invite 40 doctors, technicians and government officials for two to six weeks of study and practical training.

The ministry also plans to invite experts to deliver lectures to the trainees not only from Japanese medical institutions but also from the National Institute of Health in the United States and the Pasteur Institute in France.

LAOS

Diarrhea Outbreak Kills Seven in Toumlan District

BK3004131694 Vientiane Vitthayou Hengsat Radio
Network in Lao 0000 GMT 30 Apr 94

[Text] Between 8 March and 10 April, an extensive outbreak of diarrhea occurred in Ban Hong La-eng, Ban Uthai, Ban Toumlan, Ban Chongsoun, and Ban Meung in Toumlan District, Saravane Province. A total of 188 people were afflicted with the disease; seven died. Bountong, head of the Toumlan District Public Health Service, said that to prevent the epidemic from spreading to other areas, the district administration sent medical officials to provide urgent medical treatment and vaccinations for the people. At the same time, the people have been informed of preventative measures and the three hygienic principles so that the epidemics will gradually die out.

Diarrhea Outbreak Reported in Luang Namtha

BK1405092394 Vientiane Vitthayou Hengsat Radio
Network in Lao 0000 GMT 14 May 94

[Text] A serious outbreak of diarrhea has been reported in Na-le District, Luang Namtha Province, which has killed about 10 people and made more than 200 others seriously ill.

Report from the locality said that on 13 May diarrhea cases were reported in the villages of Ban Lechu, Hatte, Vianglao, Meuang Kout, Phouhon, Ban Nong, and in the municipal area of Na-Le District. The local administration and public health service of the district have issued a warning to local residents and sent medical teams to give treatment to affected people to prevent the epidemic from spreading to other localities.

PHILIPPINES

Health Department Reports 11 New AIDS Cases in March

BK0205092294 Manila BUSINESS WORLD in English
28 Apr 94 p 12

[Text] Health statistics for the month of March reveal that 11 new cases of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) reported to the Department of Health (DoH). [sentence as published] Of the 11 cases, five have already died from the disease while the virus in the six other victims are in the full blown stage of AIDS.

However, the report did not specify how the victims were infected. AIDS is usually transmitted through sexual intercourse, blood transfusion or via the mother's placenta where babies contract the virus in their mother's womb.

DoH AIDS Unit Program Manager Dennis Maducdoc said more than half of those who were reported in the March AIDS registry are very young. "Most of their ages range from 15 to 29," he said. He also said that of the 11 cases, seven are assumed to have come from commercial sex workers in Angeles City where a U.S. organization conducted a study and found seven positive cases of AIDS out of the 1,767 blood samples it tested.

The number of HIV-AIDS victims continues to increase as the total number of reported cases from 1984 to February this year reached 494. The number of full-blown AIDS cases has already reached 136.

SINGAPORE

Ministry Reports on Increase in Dengue, Malaria Cases

BK2904124794 Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES
in English 29 Apr 94 p 26

[By Dominic Nathan]

[Excerpts] Dengue fever is on the rise again and the present spell of rain is making it more difficult to control its spread.

The Environment Ministry (ENV) on Wednesday called for extra public vigilance as the number of houses found breeding the dengue-spreading *Aedes* mosquito doubled from 372 in February to 728 last month.

To date, a total of 260 cases of dengue fever have been reported this year, with no deaths recorded so far.

In the last four weeks alone, 57 cases were reported, compared with 12 for the same period last year.

An Environment Ministry spokesman said that the number of breedings indoors in water-bearing containers such as pails, jars, basins, tanks, vases and flower-pot plates had nearly tripled over the last month.

Outdoor checks had similar findings, he added.

Most of the breedings were found in unwanted water-bearing receptacles, gully traps, canvas or plastic sheets, and drains. [Passage omitted]

Another mosquito-borne threat, malaria, has also been on the rise, with 81 cases having been reported since the start of the year, compared with 50 cases for the same period last year.

All, except five, of this year's cases were contracted overseas.

The Environment Ministry reports that the incidence of imported malaria among foreign workers has been increasing. In 1989, there were 25 cases. Last year's figure was 116. [Passage omitted]

TAIWAN

Department of Health Reports 615 AIDS Virus Carriers

OW2304082894 Taipei CNA in English
0734 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Article by Benjamin Yeh]

[Text] Taipei, April 23 (CNA)— Eighteen more local citizens have tested positive for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) antibodies, bringing the number of AIDS virus carriers on Taiwan to 615, the Department of Health reported on Saturday [23 April].

Over the past eight months, 100 more AIDS virus carriers have been recorded, indicating the virus is spreading quickly throughout the island, a Department of Health official said.

Of the newly identified AIDS virus carriers, 15 are male and three female. The carriers are between 20 and 30 years old, the department said.

Among the 18 are three couples. One husband reportedly contracted the virus after intravenous drug use and the other two through sexual contact with prostitutes.

Five carriers were identified by the non-profit blood donation center, according to the department.

Five out of the 615 carriers recently developed AIDS-related complications, increasing to 110 the total number of AIDS patients in Taiwan.

THAILAND

Health Ministry Says 1.3 Million Infected With HIV

BK2204032494 Bangkok THE NATION in English
22 Apr 94 p A3

[Excerpts] MORE than one million people in Thailand are now believed to be HIV positive, according to Public Health Ministry statistics released yesterday.

Interior Ministry spokesman, Chiyakon Sesawet, said there are as many as 1.3 million HIV infected people according to the Public Health Ministry's statistics for February.

He described the figures as "very alarming." [passage omitted]

Chiyakon believed that the number of HIV cases is rising because 75 per cent of Thai men sleep regularly with prostitutes.

In addition, 44 per cent of teenage boys have their first sexual experience with prostitutes.

Chiyakon said that the Interior Ministry has set up four committees in response to a request from the National Aids Committee for a coordinated campaign to try to redress the alarming spread of the deadly disease.

The committees will take responsibility in planning, budgeting, public relations and analysis to ensure that the campaign is effective.

Chiyakon said the Interior Ministry has also approved a plan to set up Aids-free clubs in some government and state enterprise agencies nationwide.

"If the clubs prove successful in the fight against Aids, the ministry will expand the idea to cover all government and state agencies" he said.

Chiyakon said the statistics released yesterday show that there are 5,215 Aids patients in Thailand, 85.3 per cent of them men and 12.7 per cent women.

VIETNAM

Twelve HIV Cases Discovered in Thua Thien Hue Since May 1993

BK2604132194 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network
in Vietnamese 1100 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The Hue Central Hospital recently detected three AIDS cases in a family of three—a husband and wife and their four-year-old child. The husband, a 33-year-old drug addict, went to the Hue hospital for treatment of a fever. He was found to be infected with HIV.

Since May 1993, Thua Thien Hue Province has discovered 12 cases of HIV infection, also known as AIDS.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**Gorazde Wounded Treated in Sarajevo Hospitals***AU2504175894 Paris AFP in English 1723 GMT 25 Apr 94*

[Text] Sarajevo, April 25 (AFP)—Sarajevo hospitals Monday [25 April] took in a new load of wounded civilians with more tales of hellish conditions in Gorazde.

"Hitler was an angel compared with these guys," a woman escorting the evacuees, Ziba Hadzic, 62, said of the Serb forces who had bombarded her home town in eastern Bosnia since late March.

"He didn't go around setting hospitals and schools on fire."

The Kosevo hospital has set aside 500 beds, with 60 beds also available in the French City Hospital, Kosevo director Faruk Konjhodzic said.

Four flights by UN helicopters delivered 91 more refugees from Gorazde on Monday.

They were flown to a sports stadium which is being used as a landing strip. Most of the wounded were missing limbs. One woman had lost the whole of the lower half of her body.

Of 85 evacuees who arrived on Sunday, 36 had already been operated on.

Most were very badly wounded or exhausted through loss of blood, and others were in shock.

Some of the evacuees, having taken shelter in cellars, "have not seen daylight for a fortnight or more," Konjhodzic said.

All but five or six of the cases involved in operations were amputees. The great majority had shrapnel wounds.

Sixteen operating rooms were mobilised to deal with the influx, the hospital director said.

Genevieve Begkoyan, a doctor with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said that many of the wounded in Gorazde had simply died through lack of medical care.

She said it had become more difficult to collect and prepare evacuees for the flight because many of them had been taken back to their homes, scattered around the town.

UN sources said that a breakdown of the figures of killed and wounded by gender and age indicated that local Bosnian authorities had given priority to men of fighting age for treatment in Gorazde hospital.

A UNHCR doctor who stayed in the town, Mary McLoughlin, said there had "never been more than five percent of women and three percent of children" in the hospital.

Gorazde Faces Epidemic of 'Infectious Hepatitis'*AU2904210994 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 29 Apr 94*

[Excerpts] After a two-day break, the radio bridge with Gorazde and Esad Ohranovic, chairman of the Executive Council of the Gorazde Region, and Dr. Alija Begovic,

(?director) of the Gorazde hospital, has been established again. Here is a report by Senada Cumurovic: [passage omitted]

Ohranovic: The greatest problems that the citizens of Gorazde are now facing are the accommodation of the population that has been streaming from the occupied regions into the town and the problem of water. We are seeking the best solutions here and are insisting that the international organizations help solve the problem. The International Red Cross has tried to do something and has brought some equipment to supply at least the hospital with drinking water, that is, water for cleaning. However, the problem of the entire town has still not been solved. We are working together with the international organizations to solve the problem, but this is nevertheless going slowly. Gorazde's people are having a real problem with water and are using the murky waters of the River Drina.

Cumurovic: Thanks to the packages from the International Committee of the Red Cross and Medecins Sans Frontieres, the medical supplies to Gorazde and its hospitals have been improved, Dr. Alija Begovic said. However, he indicated a major health problem.

Begovic: It seems that we are facing an epidemic of infectious hepatitis. We already have several cases of it in different parts of the town. In such unhygienic conditions, this will be fatal if something is not done urgently.

Cumurovic: In three days, 265 wounded people have been evacuated from Gorazde but the need for further evacuation is still great. At this moment, UNPROFOR teams are visiting villages in the commune in order to transport people to Gorazde and then further on. Besides, in the town itself, 400 to 500 wounded people are awaiting evacuation, Dr. Begovic said. [passage omitted]

CZECH REPUBLIC**Destruction of Small Pox Virus Strain Remains Unconfirmed***AU2204150094 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 21 Apr 94 p 1*

[Jaroslav Kmenta article: "The Army Tested Small Pox"]

[Text] Prague—Although only a month ago army officials kept quiet about the small pox virus ever having been studied in Czechoslovakia, the army admitted yesterday that military scholars worked with this dangerous virus in the 1960's and 1970's. Moreover, according to the former employees of the Military Health Institute, the small pox virus has never been destroyed.

There was no small pox virus in the viral strain bank that the army liquidated last February; however, according to information available, it was not destroyed in the 1980's either. So far, none of the army or civilian officials we asked has explained what has actually happened to the small pox virus.

The director of the Central Military Health Institute, Vladimir Radovnický, believes that the virus was destroyed between 1976 and 1978. "The small pox virus strain (variola maior) was here once, because there is a diagnostic serum. It was a problem of the 1970's. The

strain was probably destroyed. Nevertheless, I cannot give a definite answer of when and how it was destroyed. I can only confirm that the small pox virus was not in the strain bank that was destroyed earlier this year. It would be hard for me to trace what happened in the 1960's and 1970's," he said. He then emphasized that there is no viral strain, even less the small pox one, in his institute now.

A former employee of the same institute, who wishes to remain anonymous, and who used to work with the small pox viruses, asserted that, after the small pox research was concluded in the 1970's, the strain was frozen in liquid nitrogen and placed in a special container.

In 1979, when thanks to the world-wide systematic inoculation, small pox was completely suppressed, the General Commission for Elimination of Small Pox recommended that all remaining stock of small pox virus be either destroyed or transferred to reference laboratories in the United States and the USSR. "We have not respected the research recommendation by the world commission out of laziness, rather than out of bad intentions," the former staffer of the research laboratory admitted.

Officer's Prank Could Have Caused Smallpox Epidemic in 1973

Defense Ministry Investigates Whereabouts of Virus

AU0905135194 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 2 May 94 p 1

[Jaroslav Kmenta report: "A Prank With an Experimental Virus Could Have Caused a Smallpox Epidemic"]

[Text] Prague—A smallpox virus, with which Czechoslovak military scientists were working in the 1970's, could have caused an unintentional epidemic in 1973. Vladimir Kotlar, a former senior employee at the research laboratory where the virus was kept, has claimed that—despite a strict ban—this dangerous virus was used in diagnostic exercises in the military institute in Techonin in the Orlicke Mountains.

"This was an inappropriate prank by an officer," declared Kotlar. He added that the officer filled the test tubes whose contents the military scientists were to have ascertained in the exercise with the smallpox virus. "Doctors immediately vaccinated all of the approximately 20 people who came into contact with the virus and ensured that the smallpox was not passed on," he said.

A Defense Ministry inspection team has now begun an investigation into what happened to the smallpox virus specimen after the military scientists had stopped working with it. This was confirmed by an army source who also said that the inspection team has meanwhile come to the conclusion that this dangerous virus was undoubtedly destroyed in 1975.

Doubts Surfacing About 1970's Destruction of Smallpox Virus

AU0905144894 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 2 May 94 p 2

[“(km)”-signed report: "An Order Was Issued To Destroy the Smallpox Virus; However, It Was Probably Never Carried Out"]

[Text] Prague—Despite the fact that Vladimir Kotlar, the former senior employee at the research laboratory where the smallpox virus was tested in the 1970's, claims that he issued instructions that it be destroyed, another employee at the same institute has cast doubts on its destruction. According to this source, who does not wish to be named because he fears a negative reaction from the public, the virus was not destroyed out of the sheer indolence of the staff involved in the research. "The scientific recommendation from the World Health Organization that supplies of the smallpox virus be destroyed were ignored by us out of laziness, not out of any evil intentions," he declared.

The ministerial commission that is now looking into the fate of the dangerous virus has—to date—only Kotlar's statement at its disposal. He has admitted that, although he ordered the virus's destruction, he was not personally present for it. Moreover, according to the findings so far, there are no records of this.

Meanwhile, the Defense Ministry rejects the possibility that the smallpox virus was unknowingly preserved in the Czech Republic until this February, that is, until the entire bank of viral strains was completely destroyed.

According to some employees from the military institute, a test tube with this virus could—of course—have been deposited along with the other viruses in a special container with liquid nitrogen and did not have to be registered in the official record of the bank of viral strains.

Doctors recorded the last case of smallpox in Czechoslovakia in 1976 when a Czechoslovak Airlines pilot was diagnosed as having the disease after he returned from Bombay, India. The Czechoslovak Health Service stopped inoculating the population against smallpox in 1980 after the World Health Organization had ascertained that mankind was no longer at risk from a smallpox epidemic.

SLOVAKIA

Data Reflects Deterioration in Nutritional Standards

AU0605163094 Bratislava SME in Slovak 3 May 94 p 10

[“(uj)”-signed report: "The Nourishment of Children in Socially Weak Families Is Very Poor"]

[Text] Bratislava—Since the first wave of food price increases in 1991, in the wake of the liberalization of prices, milk consumption in Slovakia has declined 12.7 percent.

According to data of the Research Institute of Nutrition (VUV), which monitored in this period the state of nourishment of the population in economically high-risk regions [ekonomicky rizikove regiony] (Orava, Kysuce), the daily consumption of milk should be at least half a liter. The consumption of dairy products has declined here

17.3 percent, consumption of cheese 13.3 percent, and consumption of fish more than 20 percent. The consumption of fruit has declined 19 percent in these regions and vegetable consumption as much as 22.1 percent. According to A. Bederova, MD, head of the Epidemiology Department, surprisingly negative findings have been ascertained with regard to children and youth from poorer regions. The deteriorated spectrum of fat substances in blood is alarming. The high level of cholesterol in the blood of school-age children and adolescents has gone up from 15-17 percent to 22-29 percent. The number of obese children has gone up by 2 to 6 percent. Almost one in three adolescents had a reduced level of selen (an important protective substance against tumorous diseases). The intake of calcium has declined 51 percent and intake of vitamin C 61 percent.

YUGOSLAVIA

Health Minister Claims UN Sanctions Caused 30,000 Deaths

AU2004065994 Paris AFP in English 2134 GMT 19 Apr 94

[Text] Geneva, April 19 (AFP)—The rump Yugoslavia Tuesday [19 April] said UN sanctions against it had caused the deaths of 30,000 people, including 15,000 children.

Yugoslav deputy health minister Svetlana Arsenic told the UN children's committee here that despite provisions to allow medical equipment into Yugoslavia, the sanctions had denied vital medical equipment to thousands of ordinary people.

The embargo on trade with Serbia and Montenegro was imposed by the United Nations in May 1992 to punish Belgrade for supporting Serb aggression in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Children have been particularly hard hit by the scarcity of medical equipment and drugs and 15,000 have died as a result, the Yugoslav minister said.

If the UN agrees to an exception for medical equipment, "even the smallest imports" are subject to complicated bureaucratic procedures at the UN sanctions committee in New York, Arsenic said.

"The examination of a large number of requests is constantly delayed and put back," she said.

Yugoslavia's ambassador to Geneva, Vladimir Pavicevic, said that because of the impact of the sanctions, Belgrade can no longer apply the UN convention on children's rights.

Sanctions against Yugoslavia have caused a sharp fall in medical cover available with some of the most vulnerable being the 3.2 million children in the region, 200,000 of whom are war refugees "of all nationalities", Arsenic added.

In several areas of Yugoslavia, the death rate has risen above the birth rate, she added, suggesting that this jeopardised "the very survival of the Yugoslav people."

Kosovo: Contagious Diseases Kill 221 Kosovars in 1993

*AU2804102094 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT
No. 344 in English 27 Apr 94*

[Unattributed report: "Over 221 Kosovars Died of Contagious Epidemics Last Year"—issued by the Democratic League of Kosovo"]

[Text] During the last year, the population of Kosova suffered from 33 contagious epidemics, thus leaving behind the death toll of 221. Compared to the data from the previous year (1992), the number of epidemics has doubled, today's BUJKU reports.

According to the evidence issued by the Kosovo Epidemiologic and Hygienic Institution, the most frequent epidemics that have been prevailing among the population were various types of diarrhea, tuberculosis, scabies, scarlet fever, enteric typhus, etc.

Children and newborns were those who were mostly hit by the diarrhea. Some 211 children out of 5,636 who suffered diarrhea died in 1993. Some [words indistinct] tuberculosis, 18 of food intoxication, 5 children died of measles, etc. There were over 3,256 registered cases of scabies, mainly among the school children, BUJKU says.

The lack of due vaccination and medicines, poverty and malnutrition, as well as the lack of medical institutions and personnel have resulted in such an alarming health care and epidemiologic situation in Kosova.

Following the Serbian crack-down on Kosova in 1989, the vast majority of Albanian doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff were fired on ethnic grounds. A great number of medical centers and clinics in many centers of Kosova have been either closed down or are run by Serbs only.

Albanian workers who were forcefully dismissed (over 100,000 Albanians were dismissed in 1990 only), as well as their children were subsequently denied insurance and health care protection.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

North, Central American Health Report Through 6 May

PA0705024794

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on regional public health and epidemiological developments monitored through 6 May.

Honduras

Meningitis—The Public Health Ministry confirmed today 144 cases of meningitis in the past three years. (Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2022 GMT 2 May 94)

Cholera—A new outbreak of cholera was discovered over the weekend in the neighborhood of Santa Cecilia, Comayagua. Ten of the infected belong to one family, six to another; the medium was food. There have been 747 reported cases and 25 deaths so far this year; this totals 5,184 cases and 145 deaths since the epidemic started in October 1991. The mortality rate is 2.8 percent. (San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 3 May 94 p 17)

Nicaragua

Cholera—Health Ministry officials have reported 782 cases of cholera and 21 deaths so far this year. Most cases were registered in the Atlantic area. Zelaya Department alone accounted for 350 cases. The officials said the main causes are water contamination and poor hygiene. (Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 April 94)

North, Central American Health Report Through 13 May

PA1405023294

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on regional public health and epidemiological developments monitored through 13 May.

Ecuador

Diphtheria—Ecuadoran Health Minister Patricio Abad announced on 12 May that a diphtheria epidemic that appeared in Ecuador at the beginning of the year is subsiding and it is expected that it will be eradicated in the next few weeks. The minister reported that four Ecuadorians have died since the onset of the epidemic. (Paris AFP in Spanish 2255 GMT 12 May 94)

El Salvador

Meningitis—Benjamin Bloom Hospital yesterday reported the first case of meningitis in the country, a four-year-old girl from Cabanas Department. Health Minister Lisandro Vasquez announced that his ministry cannot face an epidemic situation because it does not have the necessary vaccines and those available on the market cannot be acquired by the poor population. (San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 6 May 94 p 17)

Guatemala

Cholera—The Health Ministry reported on 9 May that 608 Guatemalans have died of cholera and more than 50,000 have acquired the disease since it arrived in Guatemala in 1991. According to the report, in the past few days at least

13 persons have died and 1,000 became ill with cholera. (Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1559 GMT 9 May 94)

Honduras

HIV/AIDS—The Honduran health authorities today reported that in April, at the national level, 85 persons acquired the HIV virus that produces AIDS. The report reveals that since 1985 there have been 3,494 AIDS cases and that there are 1,090 asymptomatic carriers of the disease. (Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1659 GMT 11 May 94)

Mexico

AIDS—It was reported on 8 May that according to information obtained by the National Council for the Prevention and Control of AIDS there are at least 17,732 Mexicans who either are carriers of AIDS or already have AIDS symptoms. It is believed, though, that thousands of other infected persons have not reported their disease and that there could be approximately 27,000 persons with AIDS. (Madrid EFE in Spanish 0006 GMT 9 May 94)

Nicaragua

AIDS—The health minister of Nicaragua announced on 13 May that in Nicaragua there have been 133 cases of AIDS, including the 10 cases that have been detected since January. (Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1705 GMT 13 May 94)

Panama

AIDS—Eleven persons have died in Colon from AIDS during the first 14 weeks of 1994. The people want to know if the increase in the number of persons with this disease has anything to do with the temporary presence of women from the Dominican Republic and Colombia, and that of military personnel from countries where AIDS is at epidemic proportions. (Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 9 May 94 p 5)

AIDS—Regional health director Aurelio Ranger has reported to LA PRENSA that two AIDS cases have been detected in Penonome, Cocle Province. Ranger reports that in all of 1993 there was only one AIDS case in the province. (Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 8 May 94 p 8A)

Southern Cone Health Report Through 5 May

PY0505190994

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on epidemics and diseases monitored through 5 May:

Argentina

AIDS—Buenos Aires Province Health Minister Juan Jose Mussi voiced concern over the increasing number of AIDS cases in the Buenos Aires urban area, where eight people in every 100,000 are infected with the disease. He said that there are 3,600 AIDS cases in the province. (Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1318 GMT 28 Apr 94)

Bolivia

Leishmaniasis—The National Health Secretariat confirmed 10 new cases of leishmaniasis in the northern part of La Paz Department. Health Ministry Secretary Joaquin

Monasterio reported that preliminary reports show that more than one million people are infected with the disease. (La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 19 Apr 94 p A11)

AIDS/HIV—The National Epidemiology Department reported that 138 people have been identified as HIV-positive nationwide, of whom 86 have developed AIDS, and 52 are carriers. (La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 26 Apr 94 p A12)

Chagas—Daniel Rivas, director of the Cardenal Maurer social project, reported that 75 percent of the Chuquisaca Department's inhabitants are infected with the Chagas disease. It affects 42 percent of children less than five years old and 85 percent of the adults in Yamparaez Province alone. (Cochabamba LOS TIEMPOS in Spanish 28 Apr 94 National Section p A10)

Brazil

Malaria—The health secretariat in the town of Bonito in Mato Grosso do Sul State has reported on 101 confirmed malaria cases. The outbreak is believed to be under control because the 300 most recent tests at the Adelf Lutz Institute in Sao Paulo have proven negative. (Brasilia Voz do Brazil in Portuguese 2200 GMT 2 May 94)

Chile

Virus—The Agriculture and Livestock Service in the city of Calama has reported that cattle in Cupo village are infected with a disease caused by a virus that can be transmitted to humans. The inhabitants of Cupo and adjacent villages in the foothills in the northern part of Chile are in quarantine. (Madrid EFE in Spanish 2225 GMT 30 Apr 94)

Uruguay

AIDS—Ruben Berriolo, National Anti-Aids Program deputy director, has reported that 1,410 people infected with AIDS were detected in the country through 15 April 1994, of which 477 developed the disease. (Montevideo BUSQUEDA in Spanish 28 Apr 94 p 41)

Southern Cone Health Report Through 12 May

PY1205212494

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on epidemics and diseases monitored through 12 May.

Bolivia

Cholera/rabies/leishmaniasis—Regional Health Secretary Carlos Perez said that cholera, rabies, and leishmaniasis decreased considerably in La Paz Department in the year's first quarter as compared with the same period in 1993. He added that 12 people were infected with cholera, 14 with rabies, and 10 with leishmaniasis, as compared with the same period last year when 88 people had cholera, 119 had rabies, and 190 had leishmaniasis. (La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 5 May 94 Second Section p 6)

Chile

Hepatitis—Health Ministry physician Patricia Gassibe reported that hepatitis cases had increased 81 percent nationwide during the year's first quarter. The Metropolitan Region registered the highest increase, with 134

percent. A total of 2,275 cases were reported nationwide through the year's 13th week. (Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 29 Apr 94 p C6)

Peru

Malaria—A Health Ministry official on 3 May reported that 197 malaria cases have been registered so far this year in Santa Maria de Huachipa and Jicamarca Districts, Chosica Province. (Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 4 May 94 p A7)

Uruguay

Tuberculosis—The number of tuberculosis cases dropped 8 percent nationwide between 1980 and 1992, which shows that the country registered the lowest rate in Latin America. The figures remained unchanged in 1993. (Montevideo EL PAIS in Spanish 29 Apr 94 p 14)

Southern Cone Health Report Through 21 April

PY2104204794

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on epidemics and diseases monitored through 21 April.

Argentina

Meningitis—The Health and Social Action Ministry on 11 April reported that four new meningitis cases were detected in the past few hours at the Sor Maria Children's Hospital in La Plata. Nine children infected with the disease have been admitted in this hospital so far. (Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1915 GMT 11 Apr 94)

Bolivia

Leprosy—A leprosy outbreak is spreading throughout several provinces of the northern part of La Paz, where more than 500 cases have been already detected. The disease is spread by mosquitoes and it affects mainly the peasants of the Bolivian Altiplano. (Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1613 GMT 17 Apr 94)

Brazil

Cholera—The Health Secretariat reported that 152 cholera cases were registered in Pernambuco State from 7 to 13 April; that is an average of 1.7 percent new cases per day. The disease affected 2,985 people in this state from 1 January to 13 April. Ceara continues to be the leading state with 17,377 cases and 72 fatalities. (Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO Paulo in Portuguese 15 Apr 94 Section 3 p 4)

Chile

Cholera—Health authorities have reinforced the measures on control and prevention of cholera, and declared an epidemiologic alert after the Public Health Institute Laboratory detected a new cholera focus in an irrigation system in the township of Colina, 35 km north of Santiago. (Madrid EFE in Spanish 1705 GMT 16 Apr 94)

Brazilian Health Ministry To Import Meningitis Vaccine From Cuba

FL2004204694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 20 Apr 94

[Text] Brazilian Health Minister Henrique Santillo has announced in Rio de Janeiro that he is holding talks with Cuba in order to import the meningococcal meningitis vaccine, the only of its kind in the world. The objective of his ministry is to conduct a vaccination campaign in Rio de Janeiro, where, even though there is no epidemic, meningitis has already taken the lives of 10 infants this year alone. Santillo also stated that the vaccination will be conducted in Brazil as soon as possible.

Santillo went on to say that there are cases of meningococcal meningitis in many nations. He also acknowledged the effectiveness of the Cuban-made medicine to counter this illness.

Public Health Minister, Peruvian Counterpart Sign Accord

FL2304150094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] A protocol of intent in the sphere of health has been signed in this capital by the public health ministers of Cuba and Peru, Julio Teja and Jaime Freundt-Thurne, respectively. The document points out existing possibilities for economic, scientific-technical, and commercial cooperation, and the ways in which these possibilities can continue to be developed in primary healthcare, preparation and training of human resources, and the marketing of specific generic medicines, vaccines, and medical equipment.

Institutions such as the Finlay Institute, the (Hebert Biotech) firm, and the Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology Center turned in a proposal for the acquisition of the meningitis-B/C vaccine and the hepatitis-B vaccine, respectively. [sentence as heard]

CUBA

Environmental Cleanup Plan to Reverse Deteriorating Health Conditions

FL2504200894 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 25 Apr 94

["First Thing" program health segment by Dr. Miguel Barroso Molina—live or recorded]

[Excerpts]

Barroso: Good morning, listeners. Today we are going to talk about the very important, overall environmental cleanup plan. My guest today is Dr. (Adelaida Ibaz Monet), a specialist in hygiene and epidemiology from Havana Province, whom I welcome to this program.

(Ibaz): Thank you very much, Dr. Barroso.

Barroso: Adelaida, what was the origin of this Overall Environmental Cleanup Plan [Plan Integral de Higiene y Salud Ambiental]? And let's call it PIHA, to give it an acronym.

(Ibaz): Since 1990, because of the restrictions of the special period, there has been a gradual deterioration of the hygiene and health conditions in Havana, and of course in the province as well. This situation has brought with it a whole series of difficulties in supplying water and in chlorinating the water supply. There are also difficulties in treating and disposing of liquid wastes, as well as in collecting, transporting, and disposing of solid wastes.

Along with this has come an increase in the incidence of infestations of different kinds, such as mosquitoes, flies, cockroaches, and rodents. All this brings with it a deterioration in hygiene and health habits, which in turn brings significant changes in the incidence and mortality rates of contagious diseases.

Barroso: Doctor, what are the contagious diseases that most increase in such a situation?

(Ibaz): Among them are acute diarrheas, different types of hepatitis, leptospirosis, etc.

Barroso: And tell me: Is not cholera among these contagious diseases? What measures are being taken against cholera here in Cuba? Because we know that there is a cholera epidemic, that cholera is practically pandemic, in Latin America right now.

(Ibaz): As you have rightly said, the moment this cholera pandemic hit America, our country took pertinent measures, and there is an overall plan, in this connection. Our country is not exempt from risk, of course, and such a thing would do us serious damage, not just to health but also from the economic point of view. [passage omitted]

Barroso: There is a disease you mentioned that is on the rise right now: leptospirosis. We know that leptospirosis is a disease whose symptoms resemble many other illnesses, because it can cause fevers. Sometimes people even have renal problems; we know of patients who have displayed hematuria and turned out to have leptospirosis. The disease can be benign but it can also be fatal. What strategy are you using to prevent this increase in leptospirosis? [sentence as heard] Which we also know to be a disease caused by animals, right? I mean, it is a zoonosis.

(Ibaz): That is correct. Leptospirosis is a zoonosis that is transmitted not just by dogs, as is commonly believed. There are other animals that can transmit the leptospira. The population very frequently raises pigs and other domestic animals that can also transmit the leptospira.

In Havana Province, in particular, as one of the first steps prior to discussing this plan for cleaning up the environment and after the surveying that has been done in the different municipalities, we have begun implementing a plan to eliminate rats. This plan basically entails diminishing the number of rodents in the province and targets certain priority centers such as cane camps, vacation time agricultural labor sites, food program camps, schools and health establishments, and centers where food is processed and sold. [passage omitted]

ECUADOR

Dengue, Diphtheria, Malaria Figures Reviewed

Dengue Figures Contradictory

94WE0236A Quito HOY in Spanish 19 Mar 94 p 6

[Text] The authorities of the Ministry of Public Health have denied that there is an epidemic of classic dengue fever affecting 6,000 persons in the Canton of Macara, Loja Province, although the figures reported by the authorities in Quito, Macara, and Loja continue to contradict each other.

Reports issued in the last few days by Ramon Aguirre, director of health of the Province of Loja, state that in the Canton of Macara 6,000 cases of classic dengue fever had been identified in the last few weeks. This amounts to 20 percent of the total population. As a result he even asked for the declaration of a health emergency in the Canton of Macara.

This same information was confirmed on the following day by Dr. Dalton Arevalo, the director of the Hospital of Macara, and by Dr. Jose Prado. Both of them pointed out that the situation was not a cause for particular alarm, after comparing the number of sick persons and the total number of persons living in the canton.

Two days after the report by the director of health of the Canton of Loja was issued the Ministry of Health explained that a survey of the population had been carried out to determine how many persons had ever suffered from dengue fever in their whole lives. The result of the survey was that 20 percent of the population of the canton had suffered from dengue fever at one time or another. The Canton of Macara has a population of 30,000 people.

In the entire Province of Loja 39 cases of classic dengue fever were reported during the first two months of 1994. It is expected that data for the month of March will show that the total figure does not exceed 100 cases, the authorities said, as they confirmed that this was not an epidemic in any way.

For his part Ricardo Canizares, the regional chief of epidemiology, said in Guayaquil that, according to data provided by the Leopoldo Izquieta Perez Institute of Health, no more than three cases of classic dengue fever had been positively confirmed in the Canton of Macara. An additional 46 cases were reported but not confirmed. Meanwhile, when Nicolas Jara, the undersecretary of health, was asked about the number of cases of dengue fever recorded in the Canton of Macara, he stated that he did not know the figure. However, he ordered that the

information be collected. It was reported that in January and February of 1994 39 cases were confirmed in all of the Province of Loja, and it is expected that there will be no more than 100 cases confirmed in March.

Nevertheless, he recognized that the increase in the number of cases of dengue fever in the Province of Loja reflected the fact that no health precautions are being taken in Peruvian border towns.

Diphtheria Increasing

94WE0236B Quito HOY in Spanish 19 Mar 94 p 6

[Text] Six persons are under medical observation in Quito, with symptoms which indicate diphtheria, Nicolas Jara, acting minister of health, reported.

If it is confirmed that they are cases of diphtheria, up to this point there reportedly are 27 persons suffering from the disease. Last week 21 cases had already been confirmed.

The Ministry of Health has confirmed the death of two persons from diphtheria. Those deaths were due to carelessness by the persons concerned, who did not seek medical attention in a timely way.

Minister of Health Jara said that he does not have enough vaccine on hand to make it possible to begin a mass inoculation campaign for all residents of Quito. Nevertheless, he stated that the Izquieta Perez Institute has provided 50,000 doses of vaccine and that another 50,000 doses will be made available in the next few days. Furthermore, next week the Pan American Health Organization will provide 500,000 doses of the vaccine.

Jara said that the Ministry of Health is making sure that people living near a person suffering from diphtheria receive the necessary inoculations to prevent an epidemic from developing.

He warned people who choose to be inoculated by private medical personnel to go to well-known medical centers because, if they do not do so, they may be swindled. It is known that in some cases inoculations for infants are being given to adults, a situation which may be dangerous.

Case Reported in Guayaquil

Guayaquil—A case of diphtheria in this city is being studied carefully. This was announced on 18 March by Ricardo Canizares, the regional chief of epidemiology.

At present the case is being studied at the Leopoldo Izquieta Perez Institute to ensure that a correct diagnosis is made.

Malaria Cases Described

94WE0236C Quito HOY in Spanish 19 Mar 94 p 6

[Excerpt] Guayaquil—Between 1992 and 1993 the number of cases of malaria in Ecuador increased by 6,198, according to official data made available to HOY by the National Service for the Eradication of Malaria [SNEM].

According to the data, there were 46,711 cases of malaria throughout Ecuador at the end of 1993. This total is higher than that for 1992, when 40,513 cases were identified. This proves that this illness has not declined in Ecuador but, on the contrary, has increased dangerously, despite the continuing spraying campaigns carried out by the SNEM.

A joint meeting was held between officials of the Subsecretariat of Health of the Coastal Area and those of the SNEM and of the provincial directorates which come under the SNEM.

According to official figures, of the 46,711 cases of malaria reported in 1993 some 15,233 were of the "falciparum" variety (cerebral malaria which can cause death) and 31,478 cases of the "vivax" variety (the usual type of malaria).

Province of Guayas

Regarding the areas most affected in the Province of Guayas, in 1992 there were 1,677 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 2,710 cases of "vivax" malaria. On the other hand, in 1991 there were 3,903 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 4,701 cases of "vivax" malaria. In 1993 there were 3,903 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 4,701 cases of "vivax" malaria.

Province of Manabi

In the Province of Manabi 6,583 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 3,054 cases of "vivax" malaria were confirmed in 1992. In 1993 there was a total of 7,284 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 2,897 cases of "vivax" malaria.

Province of Esmeraldas

In the Province of Esmeraldas there were 3,768 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 7,069 cases of "vivax" malaria

in 1992, while there were 5,665 cases of "falciparum" malaria and 6,772 cases of "vivax" malaria in 1993. [passage omitted]

URUGUAY

Foot-and-Mouth Disease Eradication Plan Begins Second Stage

PY0905201694 Montevideo EL OBSERVADOR
ECONOMICO in Spanish 29 Apr 94 Agriculture and
Livestock Section p 4

[Article by Oscar Sole]

[Excerpts] Stopping the vaccination, banning the handling of the virus, a possible increase in the Indemnification Fund from 0.21 to 1 percent, and the slaughtering of animals in case the disease is reintroduced are some of the direct consequences of the beginning of the second stage of the plan to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease, which is to be implemented on 16 June.

Uruguay, which is at present considered free from foot-and-mouth disease, with vaccination, enters this new stage amid pressures and criticism from several sectors involved, but with the firm decision of producers, who together with ministerial authorities agreed that 15 June will be the last day for vaccination against foot-and-mouth disease in our territory.

There is no going back now. Agriculture and Fishing Minister Pedro Saravia will communicate this significant decision at the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) annual assembly, which is to be held in Paris on 16 May. [passage omitted]

Trade benefits undoubtedly played a central role in making such an important decision. It should be remembered that the government has announced that once the country enters the disease-free circuit, it will sell 20,000 tonnes of beef to the United States as part of a quota upon which no tariffs are levied. [passage omitted]

Uruguay has been free of foot-and-mouth disease for 46 months. No focal points have been reported since January 1991 and authorities have reported that no viral activity has been spotted within 300 km of our border. [passage omitted]

INDIA

Expert Reports Confirmed AIDS, Estimates More
94WE0240C Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English
28 Feb 94 p 11

[Text] Bhopal, Feb. 27 (PTI [Press Trust of India]): There are a total of 707 patients who are confirmed to be suffering from the dreaded AIDS in the country, according to Dr. Lev N. Khodakevich of the World Health Organisation, who is working as a medical officer for the global programme on AIDS in India.

Dr. Khodakevich, who was here recently to inaugurate a five-day national project for training doctors in tackling AIDS, said the number of unreported AIDS cases in the country could be anything between 10,000 and 20,000.

Bombay and Manipur were the most affected areas as far as AIDS was concerned, he said. One per cent of pregnant women in these two places were suffering from the HIV infection.

Dr. Khodakevich said Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Daman and Diu were the country's only places from where not a single AIDS case had been reported but pointed out that this could be due to lack of any proper reporting system for the disease. AIDS had first entered the country in 1986. The largest number of AIDS patients were found in the world in Africa, followed by Asia, South America, North America and Europe.

Forty-Eight AIDS Cases Reported in New Delhi
BK1005125794 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
5 May 94 p 4

[Text] New Delhi—As many as 48 cases of reported AIDS were recorded in the Capital till March 31, 1994. Parliament was informed on Wednesday, reports PTI. Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare C Silvera told V K Malhotra in the Rajya Sabha that free treatment was available for all ailments arising out of AIDS in the Government hospitals.

Malaria Reported Endemic in Calcutta

94WE0240B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
5 Mar 94 p 16

[Article by Marcus Dam: "Living in the Times of Malaria"]

[Text] The scourge seems to have finally buzzed its way into Calcutta and settled here for good.

Earlier this week a report reaching the State's Health Directorate stated that of the 26 cases of malaria detected in a private laboratory in south Calcutta nine were of the malignant, lethal variety known as *Plasmodium falciparum*, which had been confined for long to the districts of North Bengal. But this was just a tip of the iceberg in a city where the disease seems to have assumed endemic proportions.

The two-fold increase in the incidence of the disease has been causing concern to the authorities over the last two years. In the past year 1,545 cases were reported from Calcutta, against 728 attacks the preceding year. Any sign of a reversal in trends seems absent.

The danger limits set by the World Health Organization have been left behind, baffling experts who are alarmed over the rise in the annual parasitic index which has exceeded 5,000, confirming fears that the city has become "epidemiologically dangerous".

A major reason for the increase in malignant malaria cases (popularly referred to as cerebral malaria), which accounts for nearly eight per cent of all reported malarial attacks, is the victim's growing immunity to drugs as well as the vector's resistance to insecticides, says Dr. Subodh Dey, Mayor-in-Council, Health.

He admits that the Calcutta Municipal Corporation's fogging machines (seven in all) "have of late not been utilized optimally because of the hazards their use could cause to the environment".

The vector—*Anopheles stephensi*—seems to have turned resistant to organo-phosphorous compounds like batex, used in spraying. Moreover, with more and more drains being covered, large stretches are virtually inaccessible to spraying.

There is, however, another reason why not all zones where anti-vector measures are required can be reached. Staff shortage is a problem. In all 88 vacancies in the Corporation's Vector Control Department have yet to be filled in", Dr. Dey adds.

Largely responsible for the patient's resistance to drugs is the growing tendency among medical practitioners to ignore WHO-recommended schedules where blood samples are expected to be checked twice (seven and 21 days) following treatment, says Dr. A.K. Mukhopadhyay, Assistant Director, Union Ministry of Health and Family Planning.

There are, however, other reasons which could explain why the vector has suddenly found Calcutta so congenial, he feels. According to him these are:

- Rapid urbanization and the construction boom which comes in its wake, and
- The substantial migrant population hailing from endemic zones in the Chhotanagpur belt.

Dr. Mukhopadhyay believes that a bulk of the malignant malarial cases, which are reported from different malaria clinics in the city, come from the more "posh areas" rather than the suburbs. "For it is here, contrary to popular notion, that the vector finds abundant breeding place," he adds. These places are possibly:

- the huge receptacles of water found lying about a construction site;
- domestic water reservoirs attached to nearly every house;
- the stored water for air coolers and air conditioners; and,
- even the underground Metro tunnel, Dr. Mukhopadhyay suggests.

"Even a flower vase, where the water may have remained unchanged for about a week, is a more congenial breeding place than the highly polluted Keshtopur canal", he says.

Migrant workers from areas like south Bihar and Sundergarh in Orissa are also believed to "act as carriers of the parasite, though they themselves may be merely asymptomatic cases", according to his studies.

Parts of Chhotanagpur have a startling annual parasitic index—above 20 per thousand people, according to estimates reaching the regional office of the Ministry's Health and Family Planning Department at Patna.

The authorities have been offered a proposal to introduce legal provisions to make it mandatory on the part of private laboratories to enlist malaria cases without which the gravity of the situation cannot be assessed, says Dr. B.K. Khastigir, zonal officer, Presidency division, in the State's Health Directorate.

"Anti-vector operations can only be carried out in select sites, given the resource constraints. But without any information on the occurrence of the disease one does not know where to start", he adds.

Anthrax Suspected as Cause of Elephant Deaths

94WE0240A Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN
in English 27 Feb 94 p 11

[Text] Even as another elephant in the North Bengal forests is suspected to have fallen prey to the dreaded disease, anthrax, veterinary doctors and wildlife officials are divided over the cause of the recent deaths.

The carcass of an elephant was found in south Raidak on Friday. Wildlife officials suspect it to be the fifth victim of the disease.

The differences surfaced with the district veterinary doctors maintaining that no "*Bacillus anthracis*" could be traced in the blood of the last three victims.

The wildlife officials were however, more than certain that external symptoms showed evidence of the pachyderms being affected with anthrax. Not satisfied with the findings of the district veterinary doctors, they arranged to send blood samples to Calcutta for re-examination.

The veterinary doctors' attempt to rule out an anthrax attack was not without reason. With signs of the disease still spreading and taking its toll, there was an increasing possibility of the doctors being criticized for having failed to give advance warning.

The wildlife officials said that had there been the slightest indication of the disease, immunization programmes could have been taken up in right earnest and the casualties could be restricted. Even last year, the Forest Department undertook immunization programmes.

ISRAEL

'Entire North' Declared Contaminated With Hoof-and-Mouth

TA2604163194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1300 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] The Agriculture Ministry has declared the entire north contaminated with hoof-and-mouth disease after cattle were affected in the Lower Galilee as well. All the cattle herds in the region will now be inoculated, and restrictions will be imposed on moving herds. The northern settlements are called upon not to allow entry of unsupervised farming vehicles.

Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling reports that the disease broke out in Judaea and Samaria, and spread from there to Arab settlements in the north. Dozens of cattle have died so far.

Outbreak of 'Foot and Mouth' Disease Around Jericho

TA1405154194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
1500 GMT 14 May 94

[Text] The Palestinian police will stop the entry and exit of cattle and sheep at six crossing points into Jericho. The reason is an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the area from Hadera to Jericho. Vets from Bet Dagan visited Jericho this week and determined that some 4,000 lambs had died from the disease. They have also vaccinated more than 3,000 sheep in the Gaza Strip to prevent the disease from spreading there.

RUSSIA

Duma Committee Considers AIDS Prevention Law

*PM2504103594 Moscow KOSSIYSKIYE VESTI
in Russian 22 Apr 94 p 3*

[Article by Galina Yudkevich under the "Draft Law" rubric: "What Guarantees Will People Infected With HIV Have"—from the "Retsept" section]

[Text] First, a few figures cited by Vadim Pokrovskiy, head of the Russian Anti-AIDS Center, at a meeting of the [State Duma] Health Care Committee, where the draft law "On Preventing the Spread of HIV" was examined.

As of 1 April there were 740 Russian citizens (including 282 children) and 450 foreigners in Russia registered as being infected with HIV. But when you consider that the period between infection and the development of the outward signs of the disease averages seven-eight years and the special survey in 1993 covered 25 million Russians, then registered cases constitute only 15-20 percent of the true number of Russian Federation citizens infected with HIV. Some 110 of those infected have died. In terms of the number of people infected or sick, the situation in Russia today corresponds to the situation in the United States in the early eighties. There are fears that in 10 years' time we could reach or even exceed the current level of incidence of the disease in the United States (1.5-2 million people infected).

As is known, a law "On AIDS Prevention" was adopted in the Soviet Union back in 1990. Why do we need a new legislative act?

The main reason is that the situation is rapidly changing for the worse. For example, the problem of the increase in the number of children infected as a result of medical negligence (remember the recent Elista affair) has become topical only of late, and only in our country.

There is a subjective reason too: The previous law (which is still in force) contains substantial shortcomings. The very term "the disease AIDS" is inaccurate: On the one hand, the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome is the final stage of the disease that begins with HIV infection; on the other hand, AIDS can be caused by other factors as well—exposure to radiation, for example.

The 1990 law contains articles that are questionable from the viewpoint of the observance of human rights. Practice has shown in recent years that the provision concerning the citizen's duty to undergo a medical examination "if there are sufficient grounds for supposing that the person is infected with HIV" has led not only to compulsory examination ("sufficient grounds" has sometimes been interpreted very freely by physicians), but to considerable economic losses (total expenditure on "examination" in 1993 constituted approximately 50 billion rubles).

One other obvious defect of the law was the lack of clarity over the position of infected foreigners. According to the statistics, HIV infection was found to be 100 times more common in foreigners living in Russia than in Russian Federation citizens, although the requisite legal mechanism for their deportation does not exist.

The main purpose of the new draft law is to legislatively confirm the state's duties in relation to the prevention of HIV infection and the treatment of and provision of social assistance for the victims. Antidiscrimination measures for people infected with HIV and their families and social guarantees for medical staff at risk of infection also need to be enshrined in legislation. There must also be tougher sanctions against medical staff responsible for infection.

According to the draft law, "a medical examination to ascertain HIV infection is carried out if a person voluntarily requests it or with his consent." This is the only wording that corresponds to generally acknowledged international law standards today. Only foreigners, blood donors, and some categories of professionals—surgeons, for example—are liable to compulsory examination. If infection is established, the state has the right to deport foreigners, while Russian citizens are "subject to monitoring at a special clinic and to treatment only with their consent." They are entitled to all types of free medical assistance in outpatient clinics and hospitals, including free return travel to the place of treatment.

A large section of the draft law is devoted to social protection for people infected with HIV and for their families. In particular, they are not allowed to be dismissed from work or turned away from work or from medical, educational or children's institutions. There are special articles stipulating the rights of parents with infected children (being able to stay with them in hospitals, retaining their continuous service record with the payment of benefits in the event of their leaving work to look after a child, top-priority provision of separate housing); social protection for people in medical and other professions at risk of infection.

Finally, a special article in the draft specifies the duties of the state in relation to prevention of the disease, in particular making medical examination, including anonymous examination, accessible to all.

According to the members and experts of the State Duma Committee on Health Care, the proposed draft law needs to be fine-tuned: For example, social guarantees for people infected with HIV through the fault of medical staff and sanctions against the latter need to be specified.

In May the draft law "On Preventing the Spread of HIV in the Russian Federation," finalized taking into account all the observations, will be submitted for discussion by the State Duma.

A large section of the draft law is devoted to social protection for people infected with HIV and for their families. In particular, they are not allowed to be dismissed from work or turned away from work or from medical, educational or children's institutions. There are special articles stipulating the rights of parents with infected children (being able to stay with them in hospitals, retaining their continuous service record with the payment of benefits in the event of their leaving work to look after a child, top-priority provision of separate housing); social protection for people in medical and other professions at risk of infection.

Finally, a special article in the draft specifies the duties of the state in relation to prevention of the disease, in particular making medical examination, including anonymous examination, accessible to all.

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Government Approves Draft Anti-Epidemic Program

LD1205205794 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1934 GMT 12 May 94

[Text] At a Thursday session the Russian cabinet approved on the whole a draft federal program for protecting the territory of the Russian Federation against the appearance and spread of dangerous infectious diseases of human beings, animals and plants as well as toxic substances. The program covers a period between 1994 and 1997.

The head of the State Sanitation Control Agency Yevgeniy Belyayev, who submitted the document, said that the necessity for the comprehensive program is prompted by the growing flow of migrants to Russia, the worsening of the epidemiological situation in CIS and certain foreign countries as well as a sharp increase in imports of poor-quality, harmful goods.

Belyayev said that in 1993 his agency had to ban the sales of 1000 big batches of imported food. A total of 18.2 percent of imported alcoholic drinks do not meet medical standards. The same applies to 7.3 percent of canned food.

The official said that 11 cases of cholera were registered in Russia in 1993, all of foreign origin. In each case three million rubles were spent to prevent an epidemic.

The draft program provides for the formation of a network of sanitary control bodies on the borders, sea and air ports and railway stations.

At the federal level 77 checkpoints should be constructed or modernized in centers for forced migrants, 10 quarantine posts at railway stations, nine veterinary laboratories, 25 plant laboratories and 143 plant quarantine posts on borders. According to Finance Ministry estimates, in 1994 this will require 26 billion rubles of spending.

Bank Withholds Health Funds

94WE0208B Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA
in Russian 16 Jan 1994 p 14

[Article by I. Nadezhdin "Health Care on Short Rations, or Revoke the Bank's License"]

[Text] For Moscow health-care establishments, the new year came with an unpleasant surprise—no money. Blood banks were forced to turn away donors because there was no money to pay them. And this at a time when city medical facilities are chronically short of donor blood. In 1992, there were 360,000 registered blood donors; in 1993, there were only 60,000.

Why is there no money? Perhaps the government stopped funding municipal health-care services. On the contrary,

Moscow's city government made sure well ahead of time that medical establishments had enough money to provide a normal level of services. As early as last December, the city treasury authorized the Commercial People's Bank, where Moscow keeps its accounts, to transfer 17 billion rubles for municipal health-care needs to the checking account of Moscow's Main Medical Authority. However, MMMA received only one-tenth that amount.

"Bank officials have not provided a satisfactory explanation," says Anatoliy Solovyev, head of MMMA. "I consider the bank's actions criminal. The funds withheld were not going to support salaries and overhead, but to fund vital medical services. Many of our patients' lives were jeopardized. The bank should have its license pulled for doing this."

New Moscow Polyclinic Opens

94WE0208C Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA
in Russian 16 Jan 1994 p 14

[Article by I. Fedorov "New Homes for Health-Care Workers"]

[Text] Two new health-care facilities have opened. A modern seven-story building was constructed for Municipal Polyclinic 129, which serves residents of the former Bauman district. It is equipped with the latest in medical technology, including ultrasound diagnostic and hydrotherapy equipment and a wonderful stomatological and dental clinic. Since the old building still houses a trauma center, a "steering" committee, and a number of other amenities, Polyclinic 129 can be characterized as a modern medical facility.

Muscovites received another gift in the form of a modern Family Planning Center that has individual natal rooms as well as suites where happy mothers can stay with their newborns. It also boasts a natal unit with the latest word in intensive-care equipment. No other natal center in Moscow has one.

The Family Planning Center was built in just a year by the Turkish company Enka, which donated its services.

Private Practitioners Slow to Obtain Licenses

94WE0208A Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA
in Russian 18 Jan 1994 p 10

[Unattributed article entitled "You Can't Be a Shaman Without a License" under the "Specialist's Commentary" rubric]

[Text] The law is simple and straightforward. As of January 1, 1994, medical establishments in Moscow can practice only if they are licensed by the city. Medical offices, businesses, or practitioners who choose to work without a license face serious consequences, including penalties imposed by tax authorities.

V. I. Shastin, head of the licensing department for the Main Medical Authority in Moscow, and Ye. V. Polivoda, a top official in the same office, told this paper that the list

of those who have successfully applied for and obtained licenses numbers 795 offices, businesses, and private practitioners.

Although most of the nation's public health-care system is in the hands of licensed professionals, this cannot be said about private medical practice. Only three individuals have been officially authorized to practice medicine. They are Pastor Chzhu Ok, an acupuncturist from the Republic of Korea, M. A. Chkhikvadze, and D. M. Filler, all of whom are in private practice. No more than 30 partnerships and cooperatives have obtained licenses, although another 107 have applied for them. There are nearly 2,000 medical establishments in private practice.

Shamans, psychics, and folk healers must also obtain licenses that state the types of medical services they offer. None of the practitioners listed on the "hot line" have done so.

Incidentally, practitioners of traditional or folk medicine must undergo a different type of licensing and be regulated by a special subcommission made up of those of their peers and colleagues with a medical background. Any traditional or folk healer wishing to treat people must have a medical diploma.

Today, inasmuch as the process of issuing licenses is being bogged down by paperwork, the department responsible for licensing is, in exceptional cases, issuing temporary authorizations to practice medicine. Temporary licenses are good for three months, whereas regular licenses are good for one year.

Anyone seeking medical help should be sure that the person or establishment they consult is properly licensed. This will help to avoid problems.

Six Diphtheria Patients Die in Saratov

94WE0204A Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA
in Russian 28 Jan 94 p 2

[Unattributed newsbrief under the "In Brief" Rubric]

[Text] SARATOV. Between the 28th of December and the 21st of January, 74 cases of diphtheria were reported in the Saratov oblast, including 18 cases involving children. As of January 23rd, six people, including three children, had died of the disease.

Infectious Diseases on Rise in Moscow

94WE0204B Moscow SEVODNYA in Russian 2 Feb 94 p 7

[Newsbrief under the "In Moscow" rubric: "Infectious Diseases Continue to Attack"; based on material from the Postfactum Information Agency]

[Text] The incidence of infectious diseases continues to increase in Moscow. Especially alarming is the number of cases of diphtheria (a 3.2-fold increase since 1992), measles (up 2.8-fold over the last year), and Flexner's dysentery (a 1.7-fold increase). There has also been a 1.6-fold increase in the number of people who have contracted whooping cough. The number of people infected with the herpes virus has increased 34.92%, and there has been a 24% rise in the number of tuberculosis patients. The total

number of cases involving acute intestinal illnesses has dropped 10%, but clinical physicians attribute this to the fact that fewer people are seeking medical help.

Hemorrhagic Fever Strikes Bashkortostan; Dysentery Found in St. Petersburg

94WE0204C Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA
in Russian 5 Mar 94 p 1

[Newsbrief under the "Unfortunate Events This Week" rubric compiled by Ye. Kiseleva: "Epidemic"]

[Text] Between the 21st and the 27th of February, 87 people were diagnosed with dysentery at the Petromoil No. 5 agricultural [dairy] company. Eleven people were hospitalized, but doctors have reported that the 11 are out of danger and that the rest are undergoing outpatient treatment. On-site measures are being taken to prevent an epidemic. The causes of the sudden outbreak of the disease have not been determined.

On Wednesday, five deaths from a rare hemorrhagic fever virus that affects the kidneys were reported in Bashkortostan. The virus is carried by small rodents. Patients who contract the disease suffer either some degree of nephritis or kidney failure. No medication to treat hemorrhagic fever has been found yet.

Officials Threaten Sanctions for Striking Ambulance Workers

94WE0232A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 94 p 1

[Article "Ambulance Workers Strike"]

[Text] Fourteen of the capital's 47 ambulance substations are out on strike, paralyzing emergency medical services and leaving corpses lying in the streets.

In an interview with ITAR-TASS, Leon Akopov, chairman of the council that represents Moscow's emergency medical technicians, stated that "the strike committee is not going to back down on its demands". He was alluding to the Main Medical Authority's plans to reorganize ambulance services and place them under a different authority.

As before, ambulance service management and the Main Medical Authority are not acknowledging the striker's demands and are preparing to take disciplinary action.

According to a report issued by the council, four of the striking sub-stations sent a letter today to the mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, demanding that the reorganization process be stopped and that the mayor personally assume supervision of ambulance services.

Child Health Statistics Show Growth of 'Sick Generation'

LD0605014794 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service
in Russian 1515 GMT 5 May 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Liliya Luznetsova]

[Text] Moscow, 5 May—The extremely poor state of the nation's health is indicated by the infant mortality level. Over the last three years a constant increase in the number of children not surviving their first year of life has been observed in Russia.

Whereas in 1990 an average of 17.4 babies per 1,000 births were dying, the figure became 17.8 in 1992, 18 in 1993, and 19 a year later.

These figures from the Russian Federation's national report to the eighth world conference on the situation of women, which is to be held in Beijing next year, are capable of shocking medical specialists throughout the world—which is not surprising since in the advanced countries the figure for baby mortality in recent years has not only not increased, but has indeed decreased and stabilized at a level of five to eight deaths of children in their first year per 1,000 births.

According to statistics there has been a deterioration too in the health of babies. Whereas three years ago one in seven babies were born ill or became ill, the figure rose in the following year to one in six, and a year later it was one in five.

A steady increase in illness among children below the age of 14 years has also been noted. Our children are particularly suffering from illnesses affecting the organs of the respiratory tract, the alimentary tract, and the nervous system.

The number of congenital deformities and development defects is also growing. The number of such defects per 1,000 people has increased by over 28 percent, while the number of tumors in children has risen by almost a quarter.

The appearance of a "sick generation" of Russians is shown by the fact that child invalids alone in the country (by WHO estimates) now number hundreds of thousands. In the pre-school age group, 15-20 percent of children are suffering chronic illnesses, and by the time they leave school almost half of the children are limited in their choice of vocation by the state of their health. Specialists claim that only one tenth of Russian schoolchildren are in practice healthy.

BELARUS

Conference on Aftermath of Chernobyl; Illness in Region Mounting

PM2204115994 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
20 Apr 94 p 1

[Vladimir Bogdanov report: "'World After Chernobyl' Full of Illness and Suffering"]

[Text] Minsk—An international congress on "the World After Chernobyl" has opened in Minsk; it will sum up the latest scientific data from the countries afflicted by the catastrophe and will discuss tactics for overcoming its consequences.

The congress, which has attracted representatives from more than 20 countries of the CIS and beyond, will give priority attention to the situation in Belorussia [Belarus], which suffered most as a result of the explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Electric Power Station. Almost 1.9 million people live in the contaminated regions today—virtually one in five of the republic's inhabitants; the incidence of dangerous illnesses is constantly increasing.

GEORGIA

Over 200 Diphtheria Carriers in Ajaria

LD1405121794 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 1000 GMT 14 May 94

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Summary] In Ajaria, Georgia, 210 carriers of diphtheria have been registered and 62 people are ill with the disease, the Iberia news agency reports. The Georgian Health Ministry has appealed to the local population to go to clinics for inoculation.

LATVIA

National Center Reports Six AIDS Cases, 12 HIV Carriers

WS1205084394 Tallinn BNS in English
1701 GMT 11 May 94

[Text] Riga, May 11, BNS—The National AIDS Center has, so far, registered six AIDS patients and 12 HIV carriers, the center's Director Andris Ferdats told BNS.

Two patients have died; one of them this year, Ferdats said.

Ferdats claims it is difficult to find how many residents have fallen ill with AIDS and how many are HIV carriers because seven to 10 years may separate the beginning of illness from the moment of contamination.

As reported, the World Health Organization and the Latvian AIDS Center opened a seminar for journalists Tuesday [10 May] in Riga. The workshop is conducted by WHO expert Marie Noelle Belot.

The organizers maintain that the media play an important role in the formation of AIDS-related public opinion.

LITHUANIA

Newly Reported HIV Carrier Raises Documented Cases to 21

WS2204182194 Tallinn BNS in English
1546 GMT 22 Apr 94

[Text] Vilnius, Apr 22, BNS—One more person has tested HIV-positive in Lithuania, increasing the number of reported incidence of the AIDS virus to 21, the Lithuanian AIDS Center reported.

The center said the infected person is around 20 years old, a seaman, who got infected through sexual contact abroad. The man has a family whose members are not infected.

The center said 5 HIV-positive persons registered in Lithuania earlier already have AIDS. Children were born to two AIDS carriers. No presence of the AIDS virus was found in the children although the conception occurred when the parents were already infected.

Four out of 21 registered AIDS-infected people already died, but AIDS was the cause of death only in two cases.

Experts say that each HIV-positive person is surrounded by some 50 to 100 potential AIDS carriers, therefore the number of people infected with AIDS in Lithuania may be greater than indicated by official statistics.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Sheep Imported Into Britain From Germany Found Diseased

94WE0247A London THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
in English 14 Mar 94 p 7

[Article by David Brown, agriculture correspondent: "Germany Attacked Over Diseased Sheep Imports"]

[Text] Britain will demand tighter animal health and welfare controls by Germany after the arrival of batches of diseased and aged sheep destined for ritual slaughter by Muslims.

Some of the animals, from Poland, were declared unfit for human consumption after they were killed at an abattoir in Birmingham. They had all been allowed through German border checks.

Ministers, MPs, vets and animal welfare groups are angry about the shipments at a time when the German Health Ministry wants the EC to impose fresh curbs on British beef due to fears over mad cow disease. Mr Robin Corbett, Labour MP for Birmingham, Erdington, will table questions about the diseased sheep in the Commons tomorrow.

The EC council of health ministers will meet in Brussels on March 30 to consider German demands for new EC restrictions on British beef despite scientific opinion that it is safe to eat.

Mrs Gillian Shephard, the Minister of Agriculture, has told Mr Rene Steichen, the EC Farm Commissioner, that the German move could cause enormous harm to all beef producers in the EC if it destroyed consumers' confidence in beef. She has already indicated that Britain may claim compensation from Germany if it imposes a unilateral ban on British beef.

Mr Keith Meldrum, the Government's chief veterinary officer, said yesterday: "I don't want to get into a tit-for-tat row. But some of the imported sheep were in such a poor way when they arrived at Dover that they should not have been allowed to start the journey from Poland."

"Obviously we will be urging Germany and other EC countries to look again at their checking procedures to prevent further incidents of this kind," Mr Meldrum said that in one case a ewe gave birth when it arrived at the abattoir. But both it and the lamb were in such poor condition that they were slaughtered anyway.

It is an offence under EC and British law to transport pregnant ewes for slaughter for food.

British anger centers on four lorryloads, each of about 300 sheep, sent to Birmingham between Feb 17 and last week. Three came from Poland and one from Spain.

Sheep in both the Polish and Spanish consignments were found to be diseased. Some of the Polish sheep, ageing ewes of between four and five years old, were found to be suffering from Caseous Lymphadenitis.

This highly unpleasant disease results in internal abscesses, which could cause heavy losses among British flocks. The meat from these animals was condemned.

The sheep were part of a growing trade in old ewes, shipped to Britain to provide cut price mutton for ethnic minorities. It sells for about a quarter of the price of meat from British sheep.

The sheep are killed with a knife without pre-stunning under an exemption enjoyed by Muslims and Jews.

DENMARK

Public Health Chief on Copenhagen HIV Situation

94P20679Z Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 7 Mar 94 p 6

[Article by Lotte Mejlhede and Mikkel Thrane: "Effort Against Narcotics Yields Gain"]

[Text] Copenhagen: There are still many large problems with narcotics and AIDS in Copenhagen, but it looks like the trend is going in the right direction. The municipality of Copenhagen still has a widespread and serious narcotics problem, and new cases of HIV infection are confirmed daily, but the problems are not any longer growing. Nevertheless, it is certainly not a rosy picture that the AIDS and Narcotics Council gives in its report for 1993.

"Our initiatives in the treatment and information side, and our condom and needle-exchange programs have borne fruit. The situation in Copenhagen is less negative than many other places, but it is definitely serious," says Copenhagen Chief Public Health Service Physician Claus Lundstedt.

In the narcotics area it is particularly falling prices and rising consumption of smoking-form heroin that is causing concern. But also the group of young people who are in danger of becoming addicted have need for concern, according to the council report.

"We must have more and better treatment services that should offer individual treatment plans for each abuser. But if they are not motivated to free themselves from their abuse, we aren't going to spend money on them," says Lundstedt.

The council is trying to find a particular method for dealing with those drug abusers who are HIV-infected and sick. At the same time, a better information campaign will be directed to those in socially disadvantaged groups and foreign-language speaking groups, whom until now have been more difficult to reach.

Schoolchildren are to have education on HIV and AIDS, and there is going to continue to be free handing out of condoms and clean needles. The council is going to try and get better statistical data regarding both narcotics and HIV.

"There is a huge need for more information, because as it is now, we don't have a real insight on the extent of the problems," says Lundstedt.

Penalty Backed for 'Irresponsible' HIV Infection

Minister: Fill Gap in Law

94WE0248A Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 15 Apr 94 p 1

[Article by Louise Fleischer and Bent Winther: "Legal Experts Warn Against HIV Law"]

[Excerpt] Folketing politicians are upset over two verdicts issued yesterday, according to which an HIV-infected person cannot be convicted for having unsafe sex.

The Supreme Court's acquittal of a 36-year-old Haitian caused particular indignation. After being convicted by a city court and the Eastern High Court for having unprotected sex with 23 women, the 36-year-old man was surprisingly acquitted yesterday. Shortly after the Supreme Court's decision, an HIV-infected female drug addict was acquitted in a similar case before the Western High Court in Aarhus.

The Conservative spokesman on legal affairs, Helge Adam Moller, compared these cases to attempted murder and demanded an immediate change in the criminal code. The chairmen of the two coalition parties CD [Center Democrats] and the Christian People's Party made similar demands. Yesterday, Justice Minister Erling Olsen (Social Democrat) issued a brief news release stating that the verdicts "could bring about a change in the law," so that HIV-infected persons who fail to protect their partners could be punished.

But prominent experts on the criminal code with whom BERLINGSKE TIDENDE has spoken warn emphatically against changing the law. Professor of criminal law Gorm Toftegaard Nielsen, University of Aarhus, believes this could give women a false sense of security. [passage omitted]

Daily Supports Move

94WE0248B Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 15 Apr 94 p 10

[Editorial: "Reckless Sex"]

[Text] Reckless driving in an automobile is punishable by law, regardless of whether or not anyone is hurt. Wanton actions or thoughtlessness that put other people's lives or health in danger are punishable. Thus, one might believe that reckless sex would also be a criminal offense. But such is not the case. With its verdict yesterday, the Supreme Court decided that if an HIV-infected person performs unsafe sex without informing his partner of the risk, knowing full well that there is a danger of a lethal outcome of the act, then it is not a punishable offense.

The Supreme Court's verdict was immediately faxed to Aarhus, where the Western High Court was trying another case involving an HIV-infected woman who stood accused of having unsafe sex without informing her partner. In accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court, the woman was soon able to leave the Western High Court after being acquitted.

This puts the matter back in the hands of Folketing. The Folketing has been under the impression that the deliberate spread of infection was covered by existing paragraphs in the penal code. But now the Supreme Court has indicated that the law does not provide such clear authority. The Folketing must now do something about this. Of course, we must not start a witch-hunt against HIV-infected persons, but those who are infected must recognize their personal responsibility, which is a consequence of the fact that they are a potential danger.

The entire AIDS system, with its built-in oath of silence and anonymity, is presently based on voluntarism and trust. But when we see examples of flagrant irresponsibility, as illustrated in the extreme by the case before the Supreme Court, we cannot help but think that the system must be changed. One's own misery is not lessened by sharing it with others. Particularly considering that AIDS must presently be seen as incurable, it should be a crime for a person who knows he is HIV-positive to fail to inform his partner of the danger.

Justice Minister on Proposed Law

94WE0248C Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 16 Apr 94 p 6

[Article by Erik Bjorn Moller: "HIV Law Would Make Demands on Sex Life"]

[Text] A new law that would criminalize sex between HIV-infected persons and others will hardly have any significant consequences in itself. The law would primarily be a signal to the Danish people that they should use condoms.

Rules Must Change

This was stated by Justice Minister Erling Olsen (Social Democrat) to BERLINGSKE TIDENDE after the Supreme Court acquitted an HIV-infected 36-year-old Haitian man on Thursday [14 April]. The man had been accused of having unsafe sex with 23 women.

As early as Tuesday the legal affairs spokesmen of the coalition parties met in an effort to close the loophole in the law that led to acquittal of both the Haitian and an Aarhus woman on Thursday.

"If you do not protect your partner, you will be convicted. We will no longer accept situations such as these," Olsen said.

It is now up to Justice Ministry officials to work out a foundation that the politicians can discuss on Tuesday. According to BERLINGSKE TIDENDE's information, it is now being decided whether the new law "On the Spread of the HIV Infection" will be integrated into the penal code or whether an entirely new and independent law should be passed. At the same time, various aggravating circumstances are being considered, such as whether anal sex and other sexual acts should increase the punishment. But the big question is whether a violation of the law should result in fines or imprisonment. One possibility is to consult the penalties for assault when determining the punishment.

Dr. Michael von Magnus of the Board of Health fears that a new law would inhibit "infection-detecting activities" since, "even though it is illogical, people will become more afraid."

"Strictly from the standpoint of health care, there is no indication that laws help prevent sexually transmitted diseases. But I understand full well that there are other considerations in play, namely people's sense of justice," Dr. von Magnus said.

Public Reaction Viewed

94WE0248D Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 16 Apr 94 p 5

[Article by Marianne Harbo: "Sex on Your Own Responsibility"]

[Excerpt] Aarhus—Rejoicing by legal experts, praise from doctors, and applause by gays.

These were the experts' reactions to Thursday's [14 April] acquittal of HIV-infected individuals who performed unsafe sex. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Gives Go-Ahead

94WE0248E Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE
in Danish 20 Apr 94 p 4

[Article by Bo Jeppesen: "Irresponsible Sex Will Be Punished"]

[Excerpts] At its weekly chairmen's meeting yesterday, the coalition government gave Justice Minister Erling Olsen (Social Democrat) the go-ahead to find a way to prevent HIV-infected individuals from going unpunished if they practice unsafe sex, thereby exposing their partners to the lethal danger of AIDS.

Inger Stilling Pedersen of the Christian People's Party and Bjarne Orum of the Radical Liberals did not quite agree over when and how severely unsafe sex should be punished. But they did agree that an HIV-positive person who knowingly engages in sex without protection should be punished. [passage omitted]

"We want to end this wanton recklessness. This is not criminalizing the AIDS disease," Olsen said after the meeting.

Consequently, he has instructed his officials to determine how the penal code can be changed without having HIV-positive persons and AIDS-infected people in general criminalized by the politicians.

Decriminalization was the motivation for Folketing's abolition of the law on sexually transmitted diseases in 1988. At the same time, however, it also eliminated the basis for punishing reckless sexual acts.

FINLAND

Red Cross To Tighten Blood Donor Screening

94WE0238A Helsinki HELSINGIN SANOMAT in Finnish
6 Apr 94 p 5

[Article by Paivi Repo: "Blood Donor Center Quizzes Donors Closely on Their Sexual Behavior"]

[Text] On Tuesday [5 April] the Finnish Red Cross adopted a new form with which blood donors are more closely than before questioned with regard to diseases and sexual behavior.

The blood donor has to indicate whether he or she has high blood pressure or allergies, has ever had malaria, and whether he or she has suffered from a sexually transmitted disease during the current year. The organization is trying to pinpoint so-called risk users by asking donors more personal questions than before.

The donor has to indicate whether he or she has had partners other than his or her regular sex partner during the past two months, whether he has had sexual relations for which he paid during the past year, or whether he or his regular partner has ever used drugs injected with a needle or narcotic medications. Men are asked whether they have had sexual relations with a man.

"We don't want any risk to either the donor or the recipient stemming from the donation of blood," chief physician Tom Krusius emphasized.

The donor is reminded in the form that he must be over 18 but under 65 years old and weigh at least 50 kg. If he suspects that he may have been infected with HIV or hepatitis, he should not give blood for two months following the [suspected] infection. During that period he could infect someone else, even though the infection does not show up in the test.

Less Than 100 Cases of Infection a Year Found

The blood donor center looks for syphilis and hepatitis B and C, which cause inflammations of the liver. Nearly 100 cases of hepatitis infection, nine of syphilis, and only one of HIV were found last year.

About 300,000 bags of blood a year are given and there are 180,000 donors. The average donor is a 38-year-old male who has given blood eight times.

The blood donor center constantly needs new donors when the old ones drop out. However, risk users will not do because "the epidemiology of the HIV virus has changed. People living in a heterosexual relationship and women are becoming infected increasingly more often," Tom Krusius said. Homosexual males account for nearly half of the cases of HIV infection in Finland.

Every blood unit that is given is tested in the laboratory and any viruses remaining are killed by heating or chemically treating the blood. About 350,000 units of blood products a year are administered, but not a single case of HIV infection transmitted by blood products has occurred since testing was begun, that is, in nine years. Three Finns were infected with HIV through blood transfusions abroad.

NORWAY

Military Suspects Four Percent Infected With Chlamydia

94WE0223A Oslo AFTENPOSTEN in Norwegian
9 Mar 94 p 6

[Article by Sverre Dalland: "The Military Attacks Sexually Transmitted Diseases"]

[Text] The military estimates that as many as 1,000 soldiers might have the sexually transmitted disease chlamydia without being aware of it.

A survey taken at Sessvollmoen six months ago showed that as many as four percent of the soldiers were healthy carriers of the sexually transmitted disease chlamydia. This does not affect their ability to fight, but they could infect others, and there is a danger of complications later. This is why the military is trying to find an inexpensive and painless test that can identify those who are infected with the disease. Chlamydia is simple to treat.

"Those being inducted into the military are men who only seldom visit a doctor. For them the military offers excellent health service. In view of the results of the survey at Sessvollmoen, we feel that the soldiers should be examined for chlamydia. Such an examination could be included in the overall health care program for the soldiers. We expect the test to be included in an ordinary urinalysis. It is probably not necessary to use a painful test involving the urethra. At present various tests are being examined both as to practicality and price," explains Bjorn Petter Bardal, a doctor at the Military Laboratory of Microbiology.

The military paper FORUM discusses the chlamydia problem in its March issue. Captain Reidar Mundal of the Military Medical Service informs us that tests done on recruits indicate that one out of 25 might have chlamydia without being aware of it. If the disease is not treated, they might infect others and they might also become sterile.

"During the last few years the number of cases of sexually transmitted disease in Norway has gone down considerably. There is no reason to believe that there has been a different development among the soldiers, who represent the average of the male population of their age group. Gonorrhea and syphilis have been practically eradicated in Norway, while chlamydia and herpes are still a problem," Mundal says to the Military's FORUM.

Austrian Blood Products Suspected in Hepatitis Case

94WE0223B Oslo AFTENPOSTEN in Norwegian
9 Mar 94 p 4

[Article by Jan Gunnar Furuly: "Fear of Virus in Medicine for Hemophiliacs"]

[Text] Director Thor Krey Jacobsen at No-Re-Farm criticizes the virus cleansing methods used by an Austrian supplier of Norwegian hemophilia medication.

The National Health Inspection Agency yesterday halted all further use of a particular production run of hemophilia medication from the Austrian producer after having confirmed that a young hemophiliac had become infected by hepatitis C. The health authorities fear that the source originates in a blood product from that producer. Norwegian hemophiliacs have been asked to submit to testing in order to reveal any possible further source of the viral infection.

"The pharmaceutical company Octopharma's faulty virus cleansing method exposes Norwegian hemophiliacs to the risk of contracting serious viral infections," Jacobsen says to AFTENPOSTEN. He criticizes Norwegian health authorities for protesting EU demands for stricter rules concerning viral cleansing of blood plasma.

The case is particularly serious because Octopharma has been approved by Norwegian health authorities to produce blood products from all the Norwegian plasma extracted from the blood banks, altogether 40 tons a year. The plasma is brought to Octopharma's laboratories in Vienna to be further processed into, among other things, medication for hemophiliacs. After processing, the finished products are shipped back to the users in Norway.

Director Jacobsen of No-Re-Farm, which is the representative for the foreign pharmaceutical industry in Norway, maintains that Octopharma's virus cleansing method is far from satisfactory.

He points out that most other competitors employ a double cleansing method that kills all types of viruses. Jacobsen refers to a report from the EU Commission, in which it was revealed that as many as 84 cases of hepatitis A have been found among hemophiliacs in Italy, Germany, Ireland, and Belgium in connection with the use of hemophilia medication from the same Austrian pharmaceutical producer in 1992 and 1993. The drug manufacturer was criticized in the report for having weak procedures for the so-called virus inactivation process.

The drug that the EU Commission has brought into focus is the same one that the National Health Inspection Agency has now halted in Norway.

Erik Juel, the leader of the Health Director's advisory council for transfusion matters, takes the news of the hepatitis C infection very seriously, thinking this might be a reason to reevaluate Octopharma's virus cleansing method if it turns out that the hemophilia medication is the source of the infection. Juel, however, stresses the fact that this has not yet been established.

"Tests of this particular hemophilia medication will not be ready for another week," departmental director Anne Marie Horn of the National Health Inspection Agency informs us.

The report that Jacobsen refers to about the 84 cases of hepatitis A infection, is, among other things, the reason why an internal council for transfusion matters in the EU has proposed ordering double virus cleansing of plasma that will be marketed in the EU.

Norwegian health authorities have categorically rejected the proposal and have asked for an exception for plasma products produced from Norwegian blood. The National Health Inspection Agency maintains that Norwegian blood is so clean and subjected to such strict control procedures that double virus cleansing is unnecessary and will drive up prices. The health director's advisory council for transfusion matters says that the extra cleansing step will result in a 25-percent loss of plasma volume and that Norwegian self-sufficiency of plasma products might be endangered.

SWITZERLAND

Former Red Cross Official Charged Over Contaminated Blood

AU0905083394 Paris AFP in English 0035 GMT 9 May 94

[Text] Geneva, May 9 (AFP) - A former head of the Swiss Red Cross's central laboratory, Alfred Haessig, 73, has been charged with causing grievous bodily harm by distributing blood contaminated by the AIDS virus, the Swiss news agency ATS reported Sunday.

ATS, quoting examining magistrate Pierre Marquis, said Haessig had been charged last Wednesday and denied the accusations against him.

Judicial investigations into the spread of AIDS-contaminated blood were launched two years ago. So far seven people, including five haemophiliacs, have filed complaints that they contracted the deadly virus through transfusions in 1985 and 1986.

Lawyer Jacques Barillon, head of an association for the defence of infected haemophiliacs, told ATS the charging of Haessig was "a considerable victory," following a "long and careful inquiry."

Switzerland and Spain became in 1986 the first European countries to introduce systematic tests of donated blood for AIDS, but some slipped through. The following year, according to a Swiss television report, the authorities decided on a cover-up rather than track down contaminated batches of blood and warn recipients.

But officials said in March after an investigation that a total of 52 people had caught the virus from contaminated blood, 18 of whom died before the end of last year.

The investigation covering 315 suspect blood solutions delivered to 70 hospitals between 1982 and 1992 revealed three previously unknown people infected by the AIDS virus.

Barillon said the charging of Haessig would bring the affair into the open and other trials could follow of national and local public health officials.

UNITED KINGDOM

Spread, Concern Over Mad Cow Disease Reviewed

94WE0245A London THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH in English 20 Mar 94 p 16

[Article by Greg Neale, environment correspondent: "Creeping Cow Madness"]

[Text] It is already a multi-million pound disaster for British agriculture and now it threatens to erupt into a major political row between European governments. It is bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)—"mad cow" disease—and few would be prepared to say exactly when and where it will end.

Next week European Community health ministers will meet to discuss a German call for a ban on British beef imports to that country. Some German politicians say their country should risk breaking Single Market free trade rules because the potential health risks are so grave. Nonsense, say British government scientists.

Meanwhile, the controversy in Britain is reaching new heights. Last week, the scientific journal *Nature* called for a start to be made on replacing the British cattle population with animals free from the infection—which the magazine estimate would cost £30 billion.

Next day, one of the farming industry's loudest voices, the magazine *Farmers Weekly* hit back at what it called "a diet of speculation, half-truths and downright lies" and denounced what it called "certain publicity-hungry scientists promoted by the media more interested in fiction than fact." Calling on the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) to do more to explain the disease, the magazine concluded: "The alternative is to exacerbate the current climate of fear and uncertainty..."

The fear is not just that shared by farmers worried about their livelihood. Could it transfer itself from cows to humans?

"Mad Cow" disease was probably first observed on a farm in Kent in 1985, when four animals were put down after they were observed drooling, staggering before collapsing. Scientists at the Central Veterinary Laboratory in Surrey found that the animals' brains had become holed and spongelike—similar symptoms to the disease scrapie in sheep and the rare Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), in humans.

MAFF scientists concluded that BSE had appeared in cattle given processed feed that included remains of diseased sheep. New rendering methods, reducing the temperature at which the feed was prepared, were enabling the infective agent to survive, they concluded. Acting on this advice, in July 1988, John MacGregor, then Agriculture Minister, introduced a ban on such ruminant protein being used in feed.

Cattle confirmed as having BSE have been put down and incinerated, with the ashes being buried. In 1989 a further ban was introduced, on cattle offal sold for human consumption. That year it was officially predicted that 20,000 animals would be affected before the feed ban, together with the drying up of any supplies already on farms, had its effect. But the spread of BSE has confounded original expectations. The Ministry of Agriculture said yesterday that by the beginning of last week the total number of cattle diagnosed since November 1986 as having BSE had risen to 121,898—six times the original prediction.

The ministry believes that the reason more cattle have died is that farmers or food renderers kept using infected feed after the ban. Last week, MAFF said that the numbers of confirmed BSE cases in the first two months of this year

showed a 20 per cent drop over the same period in 1993—proof, the ministry says, that the epidemic is waning.

Yet there is still controversy. Some 8,004 cattle have died from BSE despite being born *after* the feed ban was introduced. MAFF says 5,767 of these were born before the end of 1988, and were probably fed from remaining infected supplies.

That theory has been assailed by critics of the ministry. Mark Purdey, a Somerset farmer and independent researcher, believes that the use of organophosphate pesticides, used from the 1980s as a sheep dip and to treat warble-fly infestation in cattle, could have damaged the animals' immune system, exposing them to the disease. Ministry scientists, originally dismissive, are now reassessing his theories.

More recently, researchers have suggested that in some cattle, BSE has been "vertically" transmitted from cow to calf. Given a long incubation period, such a possibility could make the disease harder to eradicate. This month 19 cattle have died on farms where MAFF is conducting a seven-year experiment into the disease.

It is a daunting possibility for the farming industry, which has responded angrily. "There is no evidence that this disturbing disease can be transferred from cow to calf," *Farmers Weekly* insisted last week. More cautiously, MAFF told *The Sunday Telegraph*: "We have never said we have ruled out the possibility of maternal transmission,

but even if it occurs, our scientists do not believe it will do anything other than lengthen the time before the disease is eradicated."

So how long will it be before the epidemic is ended? Richard North, a former environmental health officer turned consultant, and a contributor to *The Sunday Telegraph*, believes that MAFF's statistics are being skewed to produce more optimistic figures—claims not surprisingly rejected by the ministry.

Mr North said: "We have more than 8,000 cattle born after the feed ban that have subsequently contracted BSE. The claim that all of these are affected by illegally retained infected feed gets less credible by the hour."

One question—perhaps the most important—remains. If the disease has jumped from sheep to cattle—and cases have also been reported in kudu antelope at London Zoo—could it affect humans?

That prospect, discounted by most scientists—including MAFF critics such as Mr Purdey—is considered a possibility by Richard Lacey, a Leeds University microbiologist who has been studying cases of CJD, a disease with a long incubation period.

Reviled by the farming industry and privately disparaged by MAFF, he nevertheless insists that there may be a threat. "I'd expect an increase in cases of CJD by the early years of the next century," he says. "The bottom line is we just don't know what risks we may be running."

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